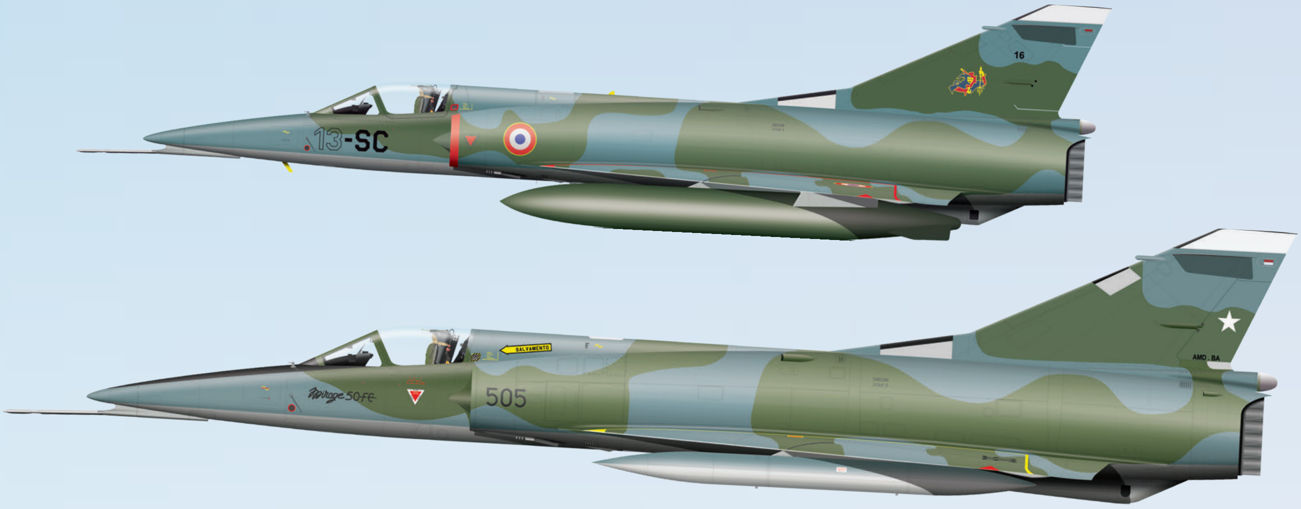
Mirages del Armée de l'Air

In the Chilean Air Force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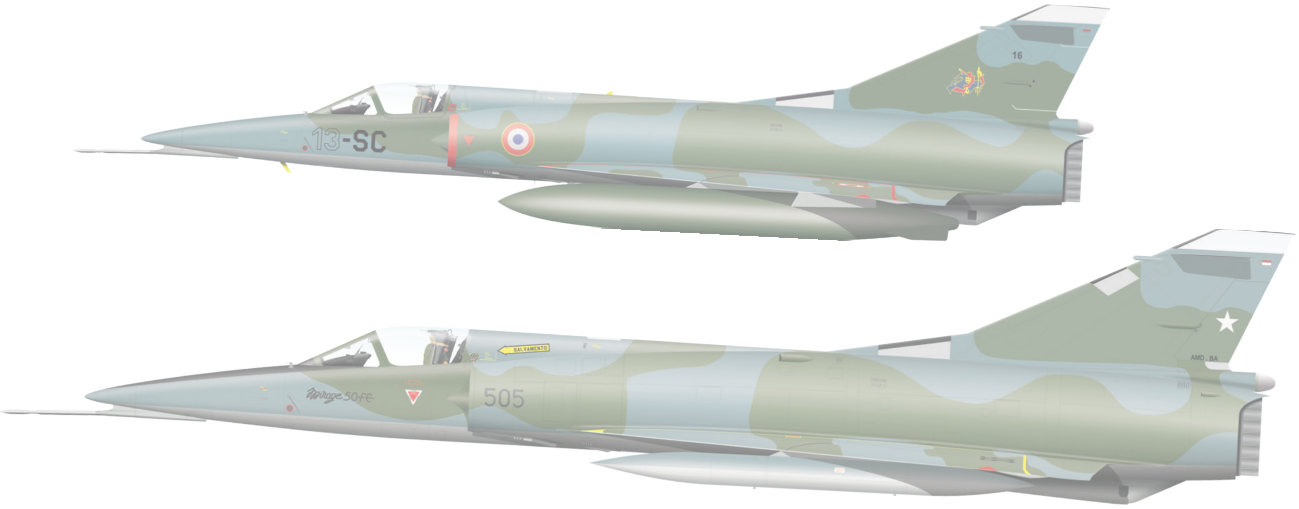
13-SC
SALVAMENTO
Mirage 50 FC
505
AMD BA

Julio Arróspide Rivera - Alexandre Gannier
Raúl Zamora Martínez

AVIATION ART HISTORY

This monograph is dedicated to the pilots, mechanics and specialists who operated the Mirage 5F aircraft in the 3/3 Ardennes, 2/13 Alpes and 3/13 Auvergne fighter squadrons of the Armée de l'Air and the Mirage 50FC aircraft of the Chilean Air Force Aviation Group No. 4, who with their dedication and professionalism, managed to achieve the objectives entrusted by their respective commands.

"Mirages del Armée de l'Air in the Chilean Air Force" pays tribute to those who made the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty and those gallant French and Chilean aviators who have joined the Infinite Flight.



Aviation Art & History

Mirages del Armée de l'Air in the Chilean Air Force

First edition, July 2022.

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Mirages del Armée de l'Air in the Chilean Air Force

504
Mirage 50FC

Foreword

The Monograph "Mirages del Armée de l'Air in the Chilean Air Force" is a research paper describing the history of the Mirages 50FC acquired by the Chilean Air Force in 1979, accompanied by an important photographic record and supported by detailed illustrations.

This work includes the characteristics and flight history of these aircraft in the Armée de l'Air, from its origin as Mirages 5J, acquired by the Israel Defense Forces, their subsequent embargo, their re-denomination and change of their power plant as a 5F model, serving in the French Air Force. This part of the history of these aircraft was developed by Alexandre Gannier, French photographer and aeronautical historian and website administrator of www.escadrilles.org.

The development of the part corresponding to the Chilean Air Force was addressed by Aeronautical Researchers Julio Arróspide Rivera and Raúl Zamora Martínez, based on their previous work of the "From Vampire to Viper in the Chilean Air Force" (ISBN 978-956-393--631-5), specifically the chapter of the "Supersonic Deltas".

Illustrations and graphic design are again part of the work done by Researcher and Illustrator Julio Arróspide Rivera. At least 5 paint schemes are represented per aircraft, from its origin as Mirage 5J to the 50CN Pantera version. This opportunity deepens the drawing of the profiles, adding the right view and the top view, allowing modelers to appreciate the patterns and details of paintings and stencils. Also, tables with color codes provided by our friend Francisco de la Cerda (Pancho Decals) are added.

The research was supported by the following retired pilots and officers of the Chilean Air Force who were related to the operation of the Mirage 50: General Sergio Contardo Flores, Commander Lionel Zepeda Lamiothe, NCOs Octavio Martínez San Martín and Guillermo Morales Castro. In addition, the following aeronautical researchers revised the text, providing main historical details: Anselmo Aguilar Urra, Claudio Cáceres Godoy, Francisco de la Cerda, Rodrigo Larraín Bergen, Javier Muñoz Romero, Rino Poletti Barrios, Luis Quintana Aránguiz, Alvaro Romero Pérez, Antonio Segovia Rentería, Dan Toro Arévalo and Danilo Villarroel Canga.

The photographic stuff was obtained mainly from private collections, from the Chilean Air Force and the National Aeronautical and Space Museum. The following people donated photographs or gave permission to use the photographs published in this monograph: Anselmo Aguilar Urra, Christian Boisselon, Alexandre Gannier, Claudio Cáceres Godoy, Francisco de la Cerda, Patrick Laureau, Octavio Martínez San Martín, Eric Moreau, Javier Muñoz Romero, Rino Poletti Barrios, Luis Quintana Aránguiz, Alvaro Romero Pérez, Antonio Segovia Rentería, Duncan Silva Donoso, Dan Toro Arévalo, Danilo Villarroel Canga and Lionel Zepeda Lamiothe.

We thank all the people who collaborated or assisted in the edition of this work. In a special way, we thank our friend, the French photographer and historian, Mr. Alexandre Gannier and his French colleagues, for their willingness and enthusiasm to make this work possible.

Thank you all..!

Julio Arróspide R. & Raúl Zamora M.

Content

Mirages del Armée de l'Air in the Chilean Air Force 3
The Versatile Mirage 5 5
  The Mirage 5 family 6
  The Mirage 5J 7
Mirage 5F and its service in the Armée de l'Air 8
Mirage 50 11
The Mirage 50 in the Chilean Air Force 12
Project Bracket 16
The Mirage Pantera 17
Flight Log 25
  Mirage No. FACh 500/508 (No. 30) 25
  Mirage No. FACh 501 (No. 1) 29
  Mirage No. FACh 502 (No. 3) 33
  Mirage No. FACh 503 (No. 5) 37
  Mirage No. FACh 504 (No. 8) 41
  Mirage No. FACh 505 (No. 16) 45
  Mirage No. FACh 506 (No. 23) 49
  Mirage No. FACh 507 (No. 28) 53
Mirages 50C/DC 57
  Mirage No. FACh 509 (No. 51) 58
  Mirage No. FACh 510 (No. 52) 59
  Mirage No. FACh 511 (No. 53) 60
  Mirage No. FACh 512 (No. 54) 61
  Mirage No. FACh 513 (No. 55) 62
  Mirage No. FACh 514 (No. 56) 63
  Mirage No. FACh 515 (No. 57) 64
  Mirage No. FACh 516 (No. 58) 65
  Mirage No. FACh 516 (No. 3F/1VA) 66
Pilots and Ground Crew 69
Walkaround 73
  Mirage 5F 73
  Mirage 50FC 76
  Mirage 50C/DC 78
  Mirage 50CN/DC Pantera 78
Mirage 5J/5F/5O in Colors 79
A la Chasse 91
Technical Sheet 95
Credits 97

The Versatile Mirage 5

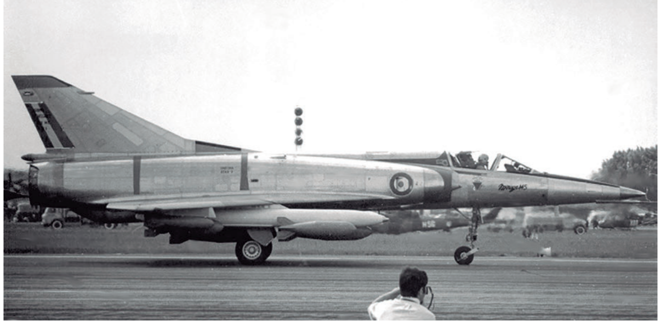
The conception of Marcel Dassault's successful Mirage 5 stems from the requirements requested by the Israeli Air Force, which prioritized ground attack capabilities and improved fuel capacity. The French manufacturer redesigned the fuselage of the Mirage IIIE, moving the avionics to the place left by the radar on the bow, increasing its length by 50 cm and giving it a more stylized shape than the Mirage IIIE. Meanwhile, in the resulting space behind the cabin, a 470-litre fuel pond was housed. The model designation for Israel was 5J, placing a purchase order for 50 units.

The controversial thing about this purchase order is that just a couple of days before the 6-Day War began, the French government imposed an arms embargo on Israel and the Mirages 5J were held back. This political decision meant Israel's isolation from its arms suppliers, ultimately strengthening the bonds of friendship and cooperation on defense issues with the United States. It also forced The Israeli industry to develop its own arms mills, catapulting Israel into the development of world-leading technology in several fields, where defense has a very important place. Today France is acquiring drones to Israel. No one could have suspected that this was going to happen 50 years after that embargo.

Regardless of the political problems generated by the French decision, the Mirage 5 and its derivatives became a bestseller for France's aviation industry, selling 517 aircraft to 11 countries, making it the world's largest export aircraft by the time. In South America, the first country to incorporate the Mirage 5 was Peru, generating a regional imbalance that forced its neighboring countries to recover land.

Finally, the 50 Mirage 5J aircraft retained were passed into the armée de l'Air inventory, being re-powered with the Atar 9C-7 engine and re-named 5F. Eight of these aircraft would go on to make up the first batch of Mirage 50 aircraft to be purchased by the Chilean Air Force in 1979, under the name 50FC.

The first flight of the Mirage M5 prototype was made on May 19, 1967, piloted by Hervé LePrince-Ringuet at Melun-Villaroche Airfield. The following month is presented at the Le Bourget Fair, flying in its presentations with a configuration of up to 14 pumps. At the presentation on Sunday, June 04, during the landing, its tires burst, causing a fire in the landing gear area and part of its fuselage. The plane went off the runway and emergency crews managed to get there in time to quell the fire. Fortunately, Dassault's test pilot, Elie Buge, was unharmed.

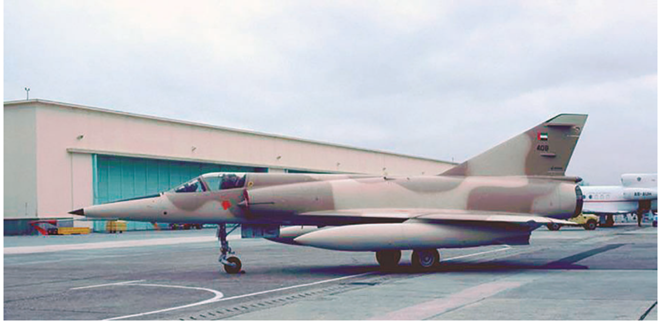


Mirage M5 No. 1 taxiing during its presentation at the Le Bourget Fair on June 04, 1967. (Jordi Rull Dalmau)

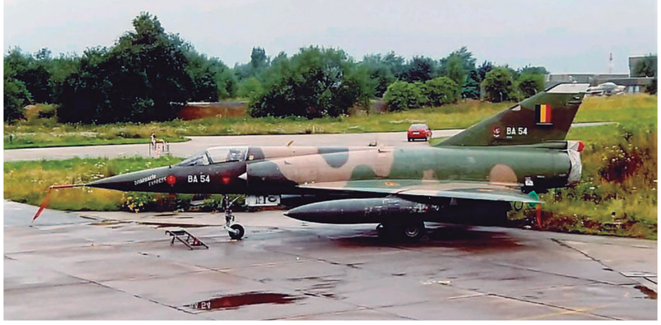
The first prototype of the Mirage M5, No. 1, showing a ground attack configuration and air-to-air missiles. (Dassault)

The Mirage 5 family

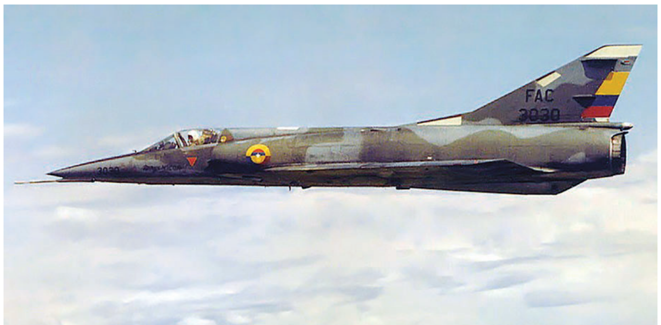
Model	Country	Total
Mirage 5AD	Abu Dhabi - UAE	12
Mirage 5DAD	Abu Dhabi - UAE	3
Mirage 5EAD	Abu Dhabi - UAE	14
Mirage 5RAD	Abu Dhabi - UAE	3
Mirage 5BA	Belgium	63
Mirage 5BD	Belgium	16
Mirage 5BR	Belgium	27
Mirage 5COA	Colombia	14
Mirage 5COD	Colombia	2
Mirage 5COR	Colombia	2
Mirage 5SDE	Egypt	54
Mirage 5SDD	Egypt	6
Mirage 5SDR	Egypt	6
Mirage 5G	Gabon	3
Mirage 5G2	Gabon	4
Mirage 5DG	Gabon	4
Mirage 5J	Israel	50
Mirage 5D	Libya	53
Mirage 5DD	Libya	15
Mirage 5DE	Libya	32
Mirage 5DR	Libya	10
Mirage 5PA	Pakistan	27
Mirage 5PA2	Pakistan	18
Mirage 5DPA2	Pakistan	2
Mirage 5P	Peru	22
Mirage 5P3	Peru	10
Mirage 5P4	Peru	2
Mirage 5DP	Peru	5
Mirage 5DP4	Peru	1
Mirage 5V	Venezuela	6
Mirage 5DV	Venezuela	3
Mirage 5M	Zaire	14
Mirage 5DM	Zaire	3
Total		**506**



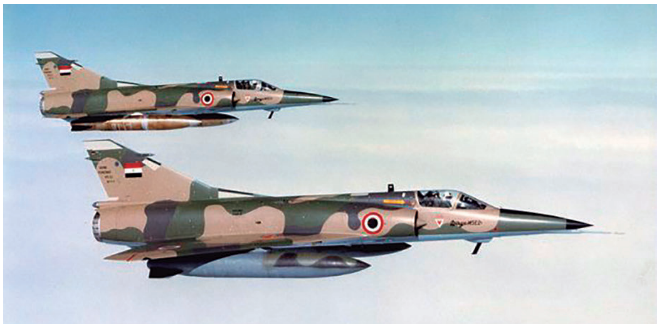
Mirage 5AD No. 408 of the Abu Dhabi Air Force (United Arab Emirates), sporting a desert paint scheme.



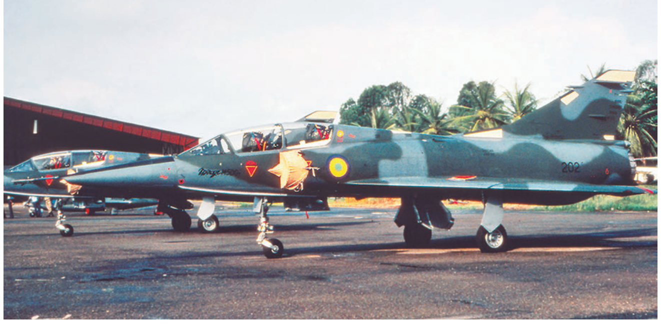
Mirage 5BA No. BA-54, of the Belgian Air Force at Diyarbakir Air Base, Turkey, during the Gulf War in 1991.



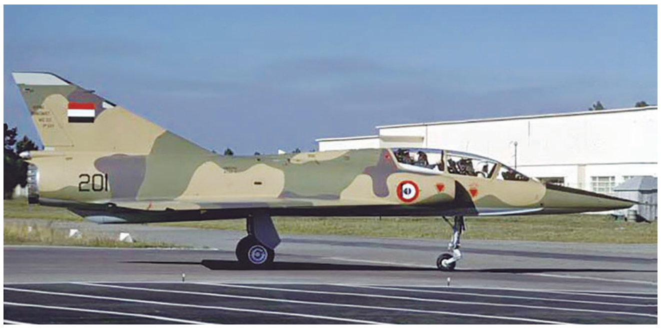
Mirage 5COA No. 3030 from the Colombian Air Force.



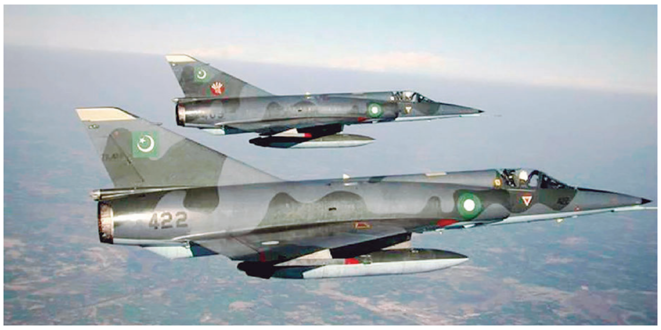
An element of Mirage 5E2 from the Egyptian Air Force. (Dassault)



Mirage 5DG No. 202 from Gabon Air Force, Franceville Air Base - M'Vengue, Gabon, 1987. (T. Laurent)



Mirage 5DD No. 201 from Libyan Air Force, recently delivered judging by its impeccable paint finish.

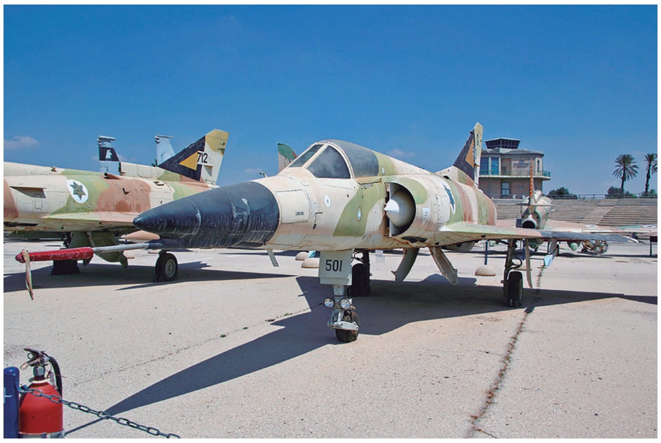


An element of Mirage 5PA2 aircraft of the Pakistani Air Force. (Pakistani Air Force)

The Mirage 5J

On April 7, 1966, Israel signed an agreement with Dassault for the manufacture of a custom variant of the Mirage 5, designated Mirage 5J. This variant was optimized for the ground attack and was called Ra'am (Thunder) by the Israelis. That weather conditions in the Middle East were generally good, the Mirage 5J changed radar characteristics all the time due to an increase in fuel capacity and armament loading and a small telemetric radar on a stylized nose.

The new aircraft was not only more capable, but also less expensive, so Israel signed a contract for 50 5J aircraft and 2 5J two-seater training aircraft. After the prototype's first flight on May 19, 1966, some of the Israeli Air Force test pilots, such as Dani Shapira and Hugo Marom, flew the prototype and made acceptance flights for most of the Mirage 5J aircraft manufactured.



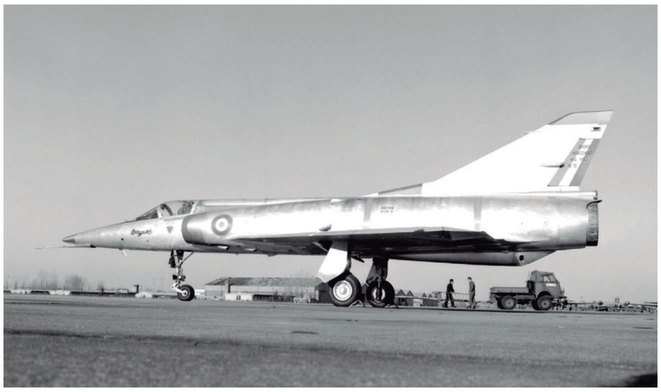
Israeli development as a result of the embargo of the Mirage 5J, the "Nesher" No. 501, c/n 1, preserved in the Museum of the Israel Air Force in Hatzerim. Interestingly, the nameplates on this aircraft say it was built in France. (David Lednicer)

In 1967, the situation in the Middle East deteriorated. Suddenly, as a result of the Syrian army's artillery fire on Israeli villages at the foot of the Golan. During the retaliatory raids, the Israeli Air Force's Mirage IIICJ shot down six Arab fighters. After a few weeks, this hidden conflict led to the Six-Day War, during which Mirage pilots claimed many victories against aircraft from neighboring countries.

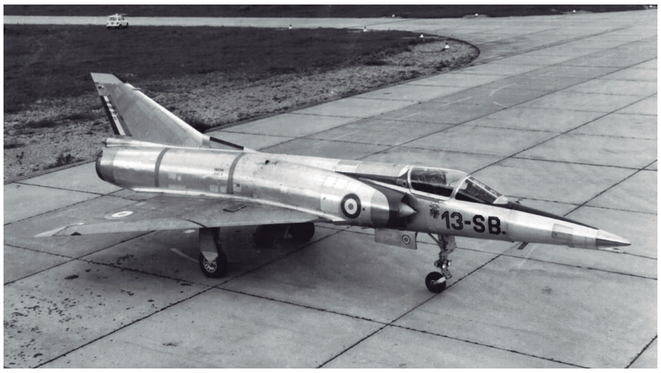
Because Israel ignored the French government's diplomatic "council" to end the conflict, General De Gaulle decides an embargo on French arms deliveries to that country. The Mirage 5J program was the main victim of this Franco-Israeli dispute. Over the next two years, despite the commitment, no solution was found to solve the problem.

Despite the total embargo, the Mirage 5J's construction program continued and was only completed on June 19, 1969, with the aircraft being put into preservation.

Mirage 5J aircraft parked waiting to be subjected to a preservation process. (Dassault)



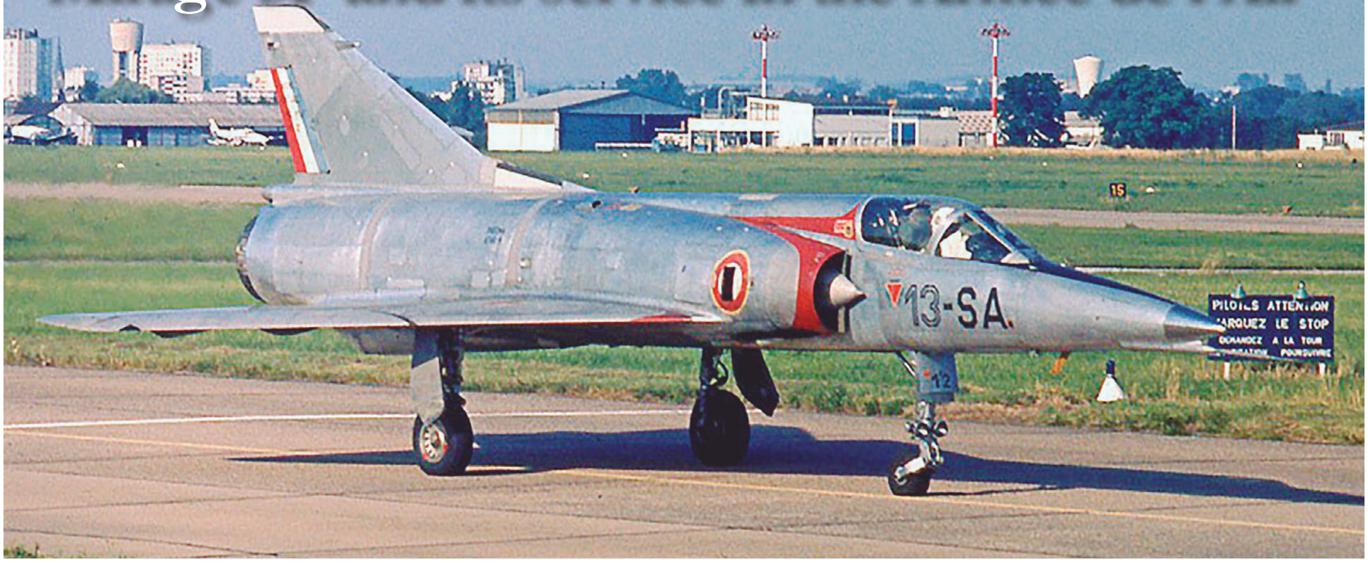
The Mirage 5J No. 16, on 26 November 1973, before moving to the Armée de l'Air and being transformed to 5F. Eventually this aircraft would pass to the Chilean Air Force as the Mirage 50FC No. 505. (Eric Moreau)



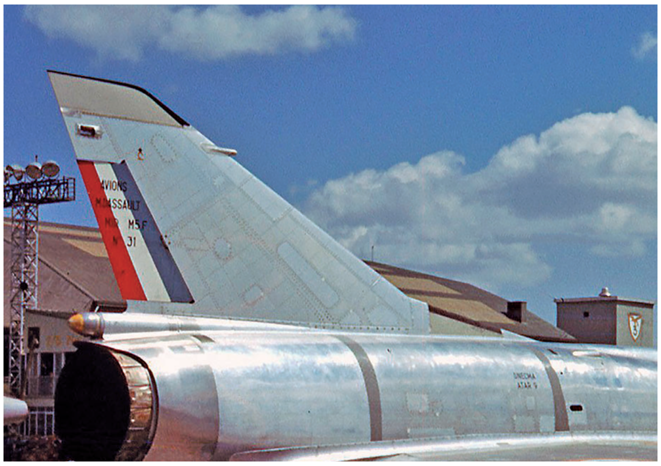
The Mirage 5J No. 50, the last aircraft to be built, photographed at Colmar Air Base, converted to 5F. (Alexandre Gannier Collection)

The final chapter of the Mirage 5J led to two medium-term situations, unnoticed at the time of the embargo: First, the private Israelis of the planes for which they had paid, enhanced their fledgling aeronautics industry, not without the help of several countries that provided it with tools and technology, which led to the domestic production of a "copy" of the French Mirage M5, dubbed "Nesher" and the construction of a jet engine, whose blueprints were provided by a Swiss engineer. Second: The French Air Force, faced with a need to strengthen its fighter jet force in 1973, decides to use the stored Mirage 5J aircraft, re-empowering them with the Atar 9C-7 engine and changing its starting engine to an electric one. The upgraded aircraft were dubbed Mirage 5F and operated in the 3/3 Ardennes, 2/13 Alpes and 3/13 Auvergne Fighter Squadrons until 1994. Of this fleet of aircraft, eight copies were sold to the Chilean Air Force with a more powerful Atar 9K-50 engine.

Mirage 5F and its service in the Armée de l'Air



The Mirage 5Js seized by the French government are stored as they leave the factory. Most of the aircraft are stored at the 279 airbase in Châteaudun until 1971. By that time, the French Air Force is in the midst of a program of retrofitting its fighter and ground attack forces, consisting of Mirage F1 and Jaguar aircraft. However, the decision is made to convert 5J aircraft to 5F to move into its inventory.



Tail from Mirage 5F No. 31, ex Mirage 5J. These aircraft were preserved at the 279th Airbase in Chateaudun until 1971. (Alexandre Gannier Collection)

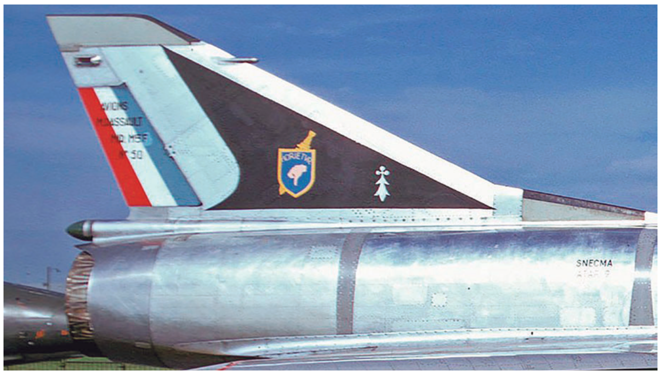
The new 5F aircraft enter service in the Armée de l'Air from April 1972, with some adaptations, mainly its power plant. The Atar 9C-5 engine was replaced by the 9C-7 engine, whose main feature was its new electric starting engine, rather than the starting motor of the previous model that operated with compressed air.

The first Squadron equipped with Mirage 5F was the 3/13 Auvergne, which was created on 01 March 1972, operating at Colmar-Meyenheim Air Base 132, along with the 1/13 Artois Squadrons and 2/13 Alps, which operated the Mirage IIIE. On 3/13 it received his first 5F on April 5, 1972, the No. 6 piloted by Captain Basquin.

The Mirages are delivered with a metallic finish, not adapted for Tactical Air Force (FATAC) missions. At the end of 1972, the Auvergne Squadron had an endowment of eight Mirage, mostly large serial numbers.

Mirage 5F No. 12, 13-SA, still in 1974 in Metz-Frescaty, former Base of the Auvergne Squadron. (Alexandre Gannier)

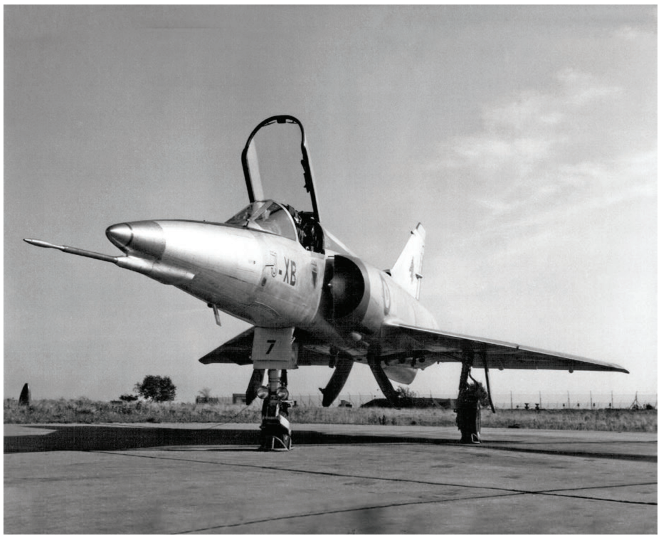
The Mirage 5F receives the unit shield that combines with its bright livening: the SPA 85 La Folie to the left of the vertical stabilizer and the Morietur of the 4.GC II/9, on the right, over a large black arrow. In the early 1970s, the other Mirages of the Armée de l'Air also applied drift shields.



The Morietur of 4.GC II/9, second squadron of 3/13 Auvergne, in 1973. The 3/12 Cornouaille Fighter Squadron has painted the vertical stabilizer of Mirage 5F No. 50. (Michel Cristescu)

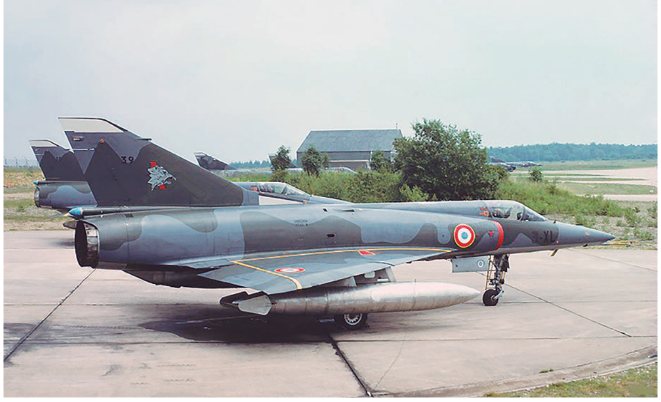
For two years, the 3/13 Squadron was the only one flying on these planes. They begin to experiment with the operational uses of FATAC's "bomb truck". The pilots of Mirage 5 become navigation virtuosos with the stopwatch and compass, a TACAN comes to complete its panoply of hunters.

On June 5, 1974, the first 5F arrived in Nancy-Ochey. On July 1, the second Mirage 5F Squadron was created, this time at Air Force Base 133 where the 1/3 Navarre and 2/3 Champagne Fighter Squadrons were located. This is the replacement for 3/3 Squadron Ardennes, which had disbanded on 15 November 1957 in Reims. Nancy becomes a base with four squadrons, counting CEVSV 338 and its T-33s.



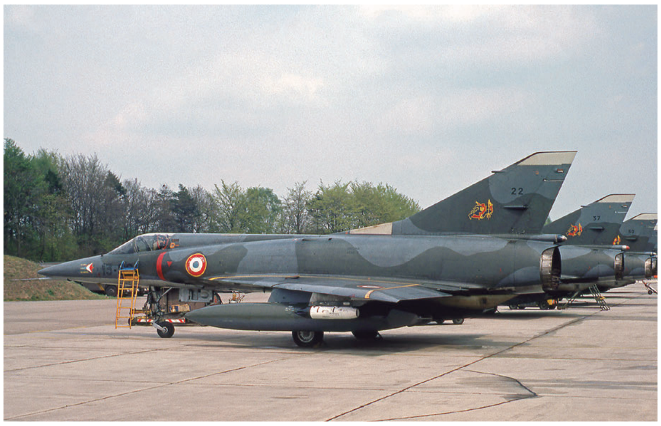
Mirage 5F No. 7, of the 3/3 Ardennes Fighter Squadron, shortly after his arrival at Nancy-Ochey Air Base, July 1974. (Alexandre Gannier)

Since January 1974, the 5F have been to the painting workshop and receive their 3-tone scheme (including the lower surface of the aircraft). Fighter Squadron No. 19 (3-XG) 3/3 Ardennes was the first to be camouflaged. Since 1975, the entire fleet has been camouflaged. However, the badge still maintains a large size, and a large red border adorns the air inlets, just as the cockade maintains its edges and large size.



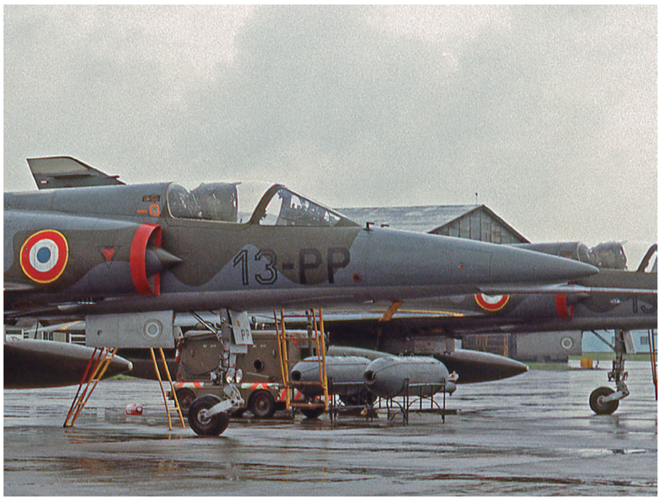
Mirage 5F No. 39, 3-XL, from Squadron at Ochey Air Base in 1975. (Alain Crosnier)

The year 1976 is a great event for the 2/13 Squadron Auvergne: after a first participation in 1974, the Squadron won the Tactical Weapons Encounter in Twenthe (Netherlands), against NATO teams flying in F-4, F-5 and F-104. Training took precedence over the sophistication of weapons systems.



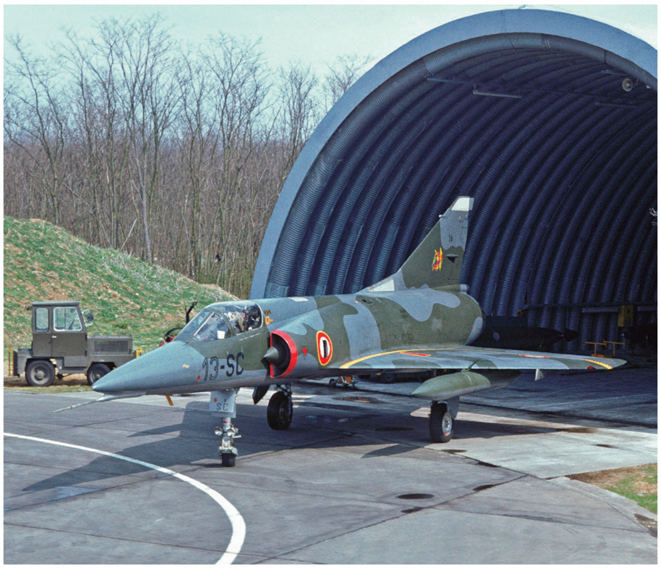
Mirage 5F of the 3/13 Squadron Auvergne in Twenthe, Holland, in 1976. (Alexandre Gannier Collection)

Similarly, Meyenheim Squadrons master specific missions and weapons: BAP 100 and BAP 120 anti-track bombs. There is also a mission to disseminate inert products to train armies in the face of a chemical attack. With two RPKs (Kangaroo Pendulum Tanks) each equipped with four 250kg bombs and a 1,300-litre ventral tank, plus two self-defense missiles, Colmar's Mirage 5F are powerful, fast and difficult-to-neutralize attack platforms on a battlefield in Central Europe.



At the bottom of Mirage 5F No. 34/13-PP of the 2/13 Alps Fighter Squadron, tanks for chemical attack training are observed, April 1978, Colmar-Meyenheim. (Alexandre Gannier)

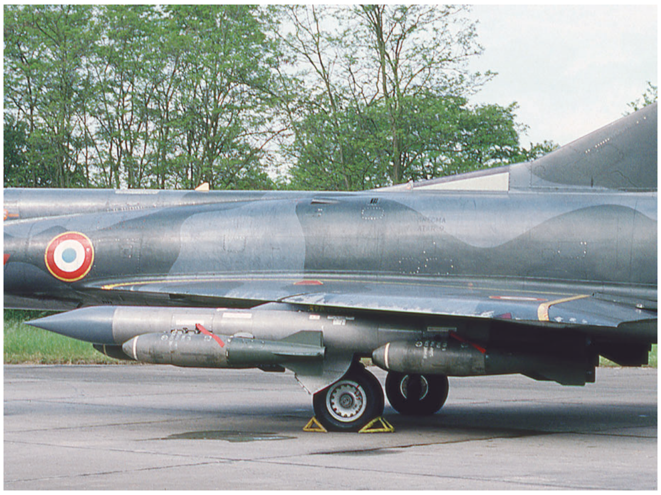
Ironically, in 1979, Chile ordered the Mirage 50, but demands to be delivered urgently. 'Naturally', the Air Force is involved and assigns eight Mirage 5s to Dassault (No. 1, 3, 5, 8, 16, 23, 28 and 30), which are modified to the M50 standard. Subsequently the Chilean Air Force orders eight new Mirages 50 (They will carry numbers 51 to 58), which will be delivered between 1982 and 1983... while Mirage 2000C makes its appearance in the Squadrons!



Mirage 5F No. 16 of the 3/13 Auvergne Fighter Squadron, leaving its new hangar in April 1978. This aircraft would move to the FACh as model 50FC with serial 505. (Alexandre Gannier)

Two Squadron 2/13 Alps Mirage 5F prepare for a "clear climate" training mission on 14 April 1978 in Colmar-Meyenheim. (Alexandre Gannier)

Since 1981, aesthetics have been successful: in tune with other FATAC units, the 5F receives a low visibility scheme. Small borderless cockades, narrow red trims and tiny squadron badges will be the order of the day. Towards the end of the 1980s, you'll even see monochrome badges.

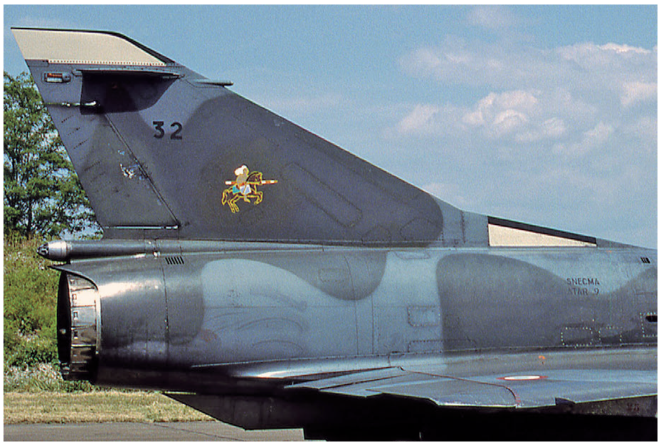


Mirage 5F No. 24, 13-SI, belonging to the 3/13 Auvergne Fighter Squadron, ported RPK tanks, with a total of eight 250 lb bombs and two 500 lb bombs in the central pylon, 1981. (Alexandre Gannier)

Mirage 5F No. 17, 13-PA, seen on July 14, 1983 by Michel Fournier, with RPK. (Alexandre Gannier Collection)

Mirage 5F No.37, 13-PB, of the Alps Fighter Squadron, prepares to roll for a test flight, May 1988, Colmar-Meyenheim. (Alexandre Gannier)

On April 1, 1993, 3/13 left its 5F, beginning the transition to Mirage F1CT. Soon after, the history of the 5F ends on June 29, 1994, with the landing of No. 32 and No. 34 in Châteaudun, the 2/13 Alps Squadron will slowly disappear. Many Mirage 5s will be sold and some preserved.



Last scheme, expanded, for 2/13 Alps Fighter Squadron aircraft in 1994. (Pascal Schwarz)

Far from being anecdotal, the epic French Mirage 5 demonstrated that operational training is a decisive factor that sometimes appropriates the sophistication of a system. A lesson that should always be taken into account when it comes to an Air Force.

Mirage 50

Origin

The Mirage 50 was the latest version of the Mirage III/5 family, which was introduced in 1979 as a successor, but not as a replacement for the Mirage 5, which had become a truly versatile fighter. The Mirage 50 benefited from the more powerful Snecma Atar 9K-50 engine and a more sophisticated electronic system that could, depending on the assigned mission, derive from the Mirage F1 (Thomson CSF Cyrano IV Radar) or the Super-Etendard (Electronique Agave Radar Serge Dassault).

The Mirage 50 No. 01, built from Mirage IIIR No. 301, first flew at Istres Air Force Base on May 15, 1979, at the controls of Dassault test pilot Patrick Experton.

Production and operational experience

A total of 24 units were produced or modified for two countries: Chile and Venezuela.

This latest version reinforced the Mirage III/5/50 family, highlighting France's position among the world's industrialized nations. A total of 1,401 Mirage III/5/50, in 90 different versions, have been built since 1958, which have served in 21 countries around the world and accumulated 3 million flight hours.

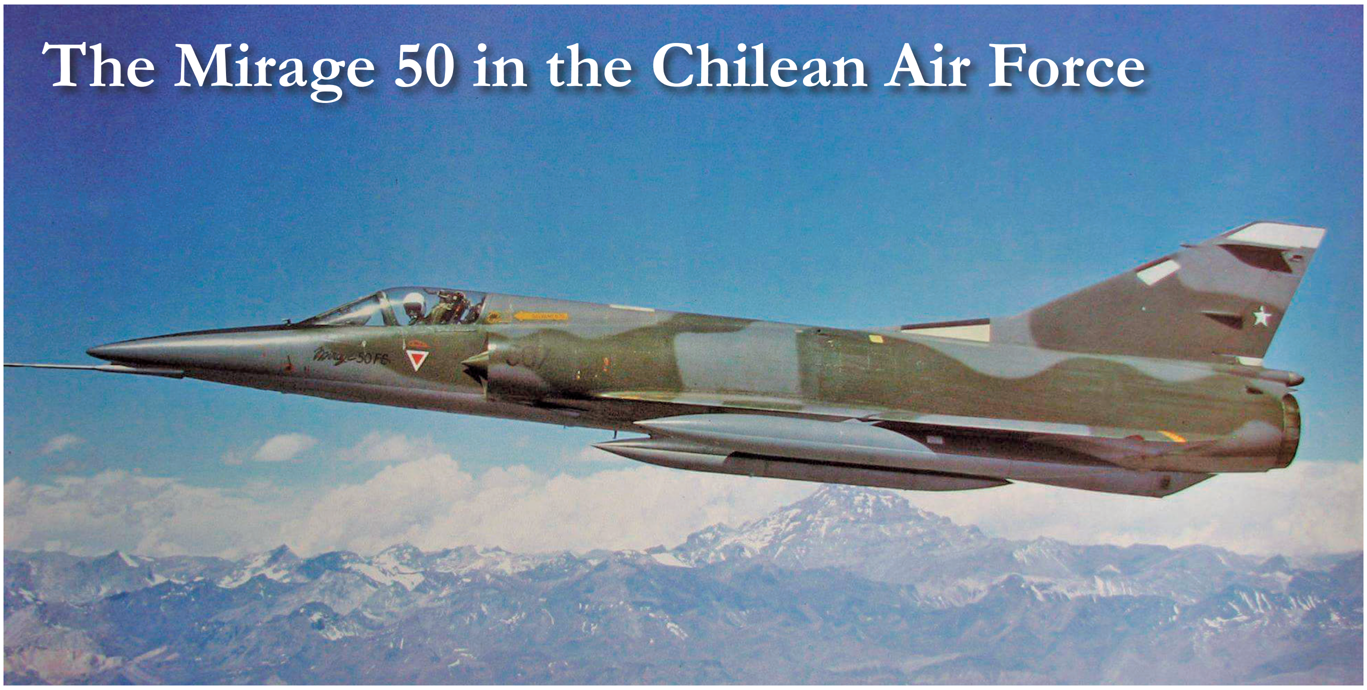
Chile was the first country to receive 16 Mirage 50 aircraft. The first eight aircraft corresponded to 5F aircraft of the French Air Force, which were modified and brought to the M50 standard, being designated Mirage 50FC (French/Chilean). The remaining, six Mirage 50C aircraft and two Mirage 50DC trainers completed the delivery of 16 aircraft between 1980 and 1983. In 1987 the Chilean Air Force received an additional training aircraft to replace the loss of one of its trainers in an accident. In 1989, the Mirage aircraft fleet underwent an improvement program by the Israeli company IAI in conjunction with ENAER. The 14 aircraft that were operational were modified, called Mirage 50CN/DCN Pantera, operating until December 2007.

The Venezuelan Air Force, meanwhile, began a program to improve its entire fleet of Mirages in 1989, with the shipment to France of 4 aircraft to incorporate the new Atar 9K-50 engine and Canards fins, being called Mirage 50EV. Subsequently, 50EV new aircraft were ordered and others modified, reaching a total of 14 Mirage 50EV and 3 Mirage 50DV, which operated until 2009, being replaced by Sukhoi Su-30 Mk2 Flanker fighters. Mirage's fleet was deactivated and six aircraft were donated to the Ecuadorian Air Force.

The Mirage 50 No. 01, painted with a tropical scheme, taxiing for a test flight. (Dassault)

FAV's Mirage 50DV No. 7512, landing in Natal, Brazil, during the CRUZEX 2004 multinational excersices. (Chris Lofting)

The Mirage 50 in the Chilean Air Force



In 1978, the Kennedy Amendment came into force, a measure imposed by the American government in response to the assassination of former Unidad Popular Chancellor Orlando Letelier and his secretary, American citizen Ronni Moffitt. The effect of this moratorium had a high impact on the operation and normal flow of spare parts for aircraft of North American origin in the FACh, with no technical information available for the maintenance of Cessna A-37B or F-5E/F Tiger II fighters.

With this reality affecting the main combat aircraft fleets, the Chilean Air Force requested technical information on the products of French manufacturer Avions Marcel Dassault - Breguet Aviation (AMD) through the Ministry of National Defense. The focus of Chilean aviators was on two of their products: the Mirage 50 aircraft and the F-1E. On July 3, 1978, from the Ministry of National Defense, document No. 1334/78 was sent to the Chief of Staff General of the Air Force, General of Aviation José Martini Lema, which provides the technical information handled by the Ministry of Defense on the Mirage 50 product and its comparison with the Mirage 5.

The information presented to the Chief of the General Staff highlights the advantages of the Mirage 50 product compared to the Mirage 5, its motorization, more powerful than that present in the Mirages of countries such as Argentina and Peru and a brief comparison of the radar options with which it could be equipped. The documentation stated that the Mirage 50 had the following performance improvements over the Mirage 5: 15% to 20% improvement in the take-off stroke, an additional 1,900 pounds of take-off weight (approximately 900 kg), an additional 140 km of range of action and a 35% improvement in mount time. At the avionics level, the Agave F radar option "Looking Radar" over the Aida II "Range Finder" with a range of 25 km and a 140° sweep was highlighted.

The influence of the conflict over the Beagle Channel islands and Argentine armament acquirement

On 25 January 1978, the diplomatic and neighborhood crisis generated by the Argentine claim of three islands in the southern of Chile, known as Conflict of the Beagle Channel, took an accelerated pace towards a war, caused by the Argentinian response declaring the determination of the Queen of England's arbitration award of 2 May 1977 "insanely null and void". The result of the arbitration award handed over the sovereignty of the three islands to the Chilean thesis, which was rejected fully by the Argentine military junta in January 1978. The diplomatic route seemed not to work, initiating the Argentinian pressure at the military level to resolve differences through the armed route and an accelerated arms procurement process that considered the acquisition of an initial batch in Israel of twenty-six IAI Nesher under the name Dagger (in 1980 a second batch of thirteen additional aircraft was acquired). The serious situation of conflict with Argentina, the impossibility of acquiring defense equipment with its traditional supplier, USA, led to the accelerated evaluation process of the Mirage platform, considering that France did not maintain any restrictions on the sale of weapons with our country.

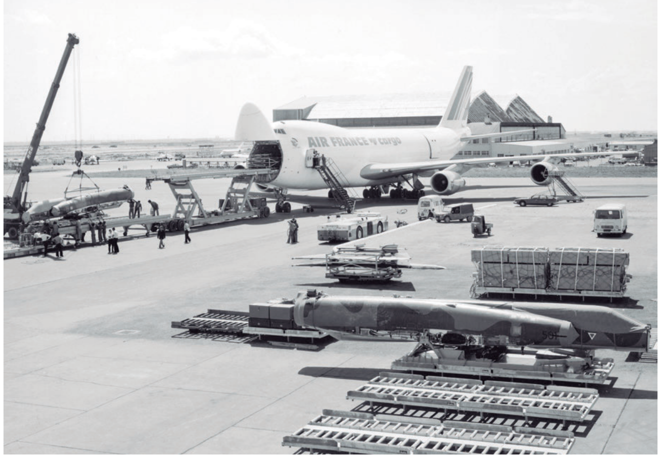
The final determination was not simple, and is evident in two factors: the first, change of supplier, something significant when considering that the predominant paradigm and doctrine in the Chilean Air Force until that date was of American origin, and the second, logistics, when opening a new supply line to the already complex task of obtaining components for the operation of combat platforms. As far back as 1971, the Chilean Air Force had conducted assessments to incorporate aircraft such as the Mirage, Draken and F-5, studies and backgrounds that were resumed at this time to make the decision to purchase this delta wing jet.

Due to the urgency of the purchase, AMD acquired to the Armée de l'Air eight Mirage 5F aircraft that had a few flight hours and corresponded to part of the Mirage 5Js manufactured for Israel in the late 1960s, they were seized by the French government in 1970, being stored until 1972, when they were put into service in the 3/3 "Ardennes", 2/13 "Alpes" and 3/13 "Auvergne" fighter squadrons as model 5F. The idea was that all the Mirage 50s corresponded to used aircraft taken out from the Armée de l'Air stock and re-powered with the Atar 9K-50, but there was the Gallic government's refusal for this purchase option, so it eventually had to be chosen between a mix of second-hand aircraft, with a new power plant, and new factory outlets. The Mirage 5F was quickly modified to the Mirage 50 standard, with its original engine being removed and replaced by a more powerful one. These early aircraft correspond to the Mirage 50FC version which was basically a Mirage 5 to which the improvements of version 50 were integrated, the most important change being that of its power plant, sharing 90% of its structural parts with the Mirage 5 model and 95% of the systems of its predecessor, the Mirage III. Regarding the engine component, Atar 9C was replaced by a 9K-50 that provided 7,200 kg of thrust at full power.

SALVAMENTO
505
Mirage 50

Chilean delegation at the reception of the Mirage 50 in Dassault, France, 18 March 1980. (Via Sergio Contardo F.)

Signature of the reception memorandums of the first Mirages 50 for Chile, by Colonel Sergio Contardo Flores, Head of the Air Mission in Europe (London), before Dassault representatives in Paris, 18 March 1980. (Via Sergio Contardo F.)



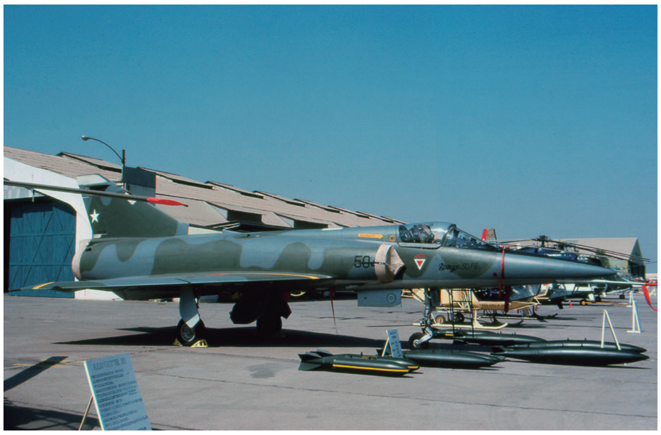
The Mirages 50FC No. 505 and 501 about to be transported to Chile on an Air France Cargo Boeing 747 in Istres on June 26, 1980. (Eric Moreau)

The first eight Mirage 50FCs were delivered to Chile between June 26 and October 9, 1980 by air and flying in Antofagasta from August 1980, receiving serials 500 to 507. Later, in October 1981, Mirage 50FC No. 500 would be re-designated as 508. All these planes arrived in the country sporting a camouflage in olive green, dark gray and its ventral section in a pearl gray with an aluminum touch, similar to that used by the aircraft of the Armée de l'Air.

Following the delivery of the first aircraft, between 27 April 1982 and 6 January 1983 a second batch consisting of six Mirage 50C model was received. These six aircraft were new from factory, equipped with the Agave radar and serials from 509 to 514. The most noticeable difference with the Mirage 50FC was its larger, stylized nose that included the pitot tube at the tip of it. They were painted in two shades of bluish gray more typical of aircraft intended for interception. Almost in parallel, two Mirage 50DC trainers were received on 28 May (515) and 24 November 1982 (516).

Service in the Aviation Group No. 4

In 1980, the Air Force High Command determined that the combat unit that would operate the Mirage fleet, it would be Aviation Group No. 4, a unit whose origins dated back to 1928 and which had been reactivated in 1975, after a break of more than 20 years, operating Vampire T.11/T.22 aircraft and which subsequently operated in 1977 the Cessna A-37B. To this end, the Logistics Command received a number of tasks to have the facilities, equipment and infrastructure necessary to operate the Mirages from Commodore Arturo Merino Benítez International Airport. In just six months hangars and units were built for staff, an operations building was enabled and QRA shelters were available to keep a Mirage element on alert, all in the northern sector of the airport, in what are now the facilities of Aviation Group No. 10. During a ceremony held on September 15, 1980, the date on which the 40th anniversary of the Battle of England was commemorated, this combat unit began operations with its new aircraft, with its new Group Commander Joaquín Urzúa Ricke. During the ceremony, two aircraft raised the flight officially starting the operation of the Mirage within the Chilean Air Force. The pilots in command of these Mirages were Captains Osvaldo Sarabia Vilches and José Huepe Pérez.

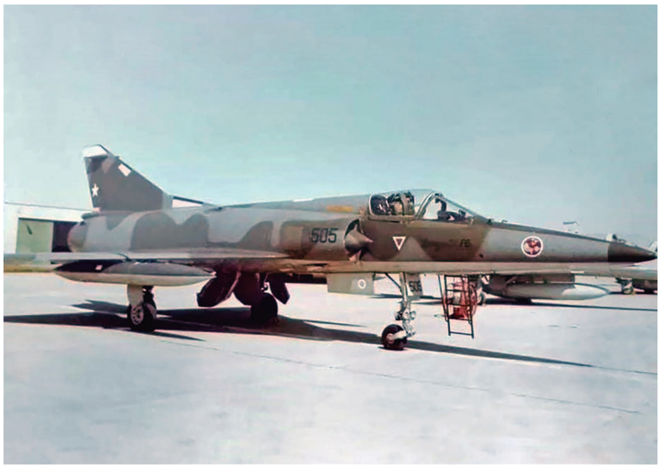


Mirage 50FC No. 504 in static presentation at FIDA 1982 at El Bosque Air Base, using the original paint scheme, although the numeral does not use the original format, which was more rounded. (Via Javier Muñoz)

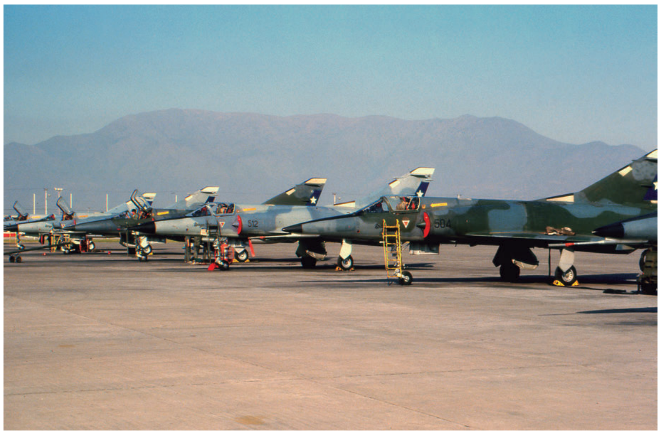
Deployments and operation

Once the new aircraft were received and as they were added to the inventory, a series of deployments began throughout the country, the most important being those made to the air bases of Iquique, Antofagasta and Punta Arenas. It is in this last facility that the Mirages began to have a greater presence given the frictions that were lived with the Argentine Military Board and the need to mark presence in the southern zone.

During the South Atlantic conflict in 1982, which were maintained by England and Argentina over the possession of the Falklands and South Georgia Islands, Aviation Group No. 4 and its available aircraft were placed on alert and deployed to the quarters of Chabunco Air Base north of the southern city of Punta Arenas. From there they conducted airspace patrols and forced to Argentinian Air Force to maintain some of its air defense fighters pending the activity of the Chilean Mirages. Understand that this was a "hot zone" since 1977 because of Argentina's claim of sovereignty of three islands of the Beagle Canal and that to date they remained in arbitration, a dispute that finally gave the reason to the Chilean thesis in 1984.



Mirage 50FC No. 505 on the Aviation Group No. 4 flight line in Pudahuel, alongside F-5 aircraft from Aviation Group No. 7, using the second paint scheme, distinguishable by the telemetric radar radome painted in black, the rudder painted in blue and the Group's emblem painted in stencil on the bow of some aircraft. (Via Oscar Pereira M.)

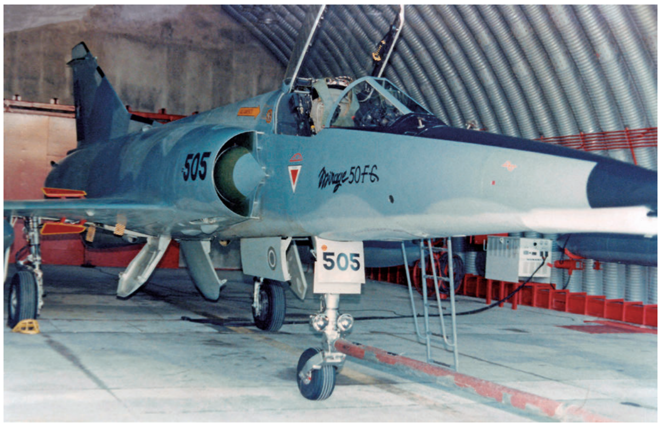


Aviation Group No. 4 flight line in Pudahuel, February 1986, before the transfer to Punta Arenas. Mirage 50FC aircraft are clearly distinguished from 50C aircraft by their schemes. This would change once they were transferred to Punta Arenas, being standardized with the air superiority scheme. (Via Javier Muñoz)

Transfer to Punta Arenas

The result of these deployments along the national territory was that the High Command of the Air Force decided to settle its main combat unit in the southern city of Punta Arenas, building for this purpose what to date is the largest military installation of this branch of national defense. A new runway was enabled at Carlos Ibáñez del Campo Airport, as well as new taxiways, a complex of fortified shelters capable of protecting and hosting a significant number of aircraft, dispersion/QRA hangars capable of hosting aircraft endowments and a large armored QRA capable of keeping aircraft on 24 x 7 alert with a response time of 3 minutes and immediate access to the main runway. All these fortifications received symbolic names such as "Armour", "Shield" and "Dragon", the latter possible to see from the passenger terminal of the southern city. These works were ready in March 1986, allowing the transfer and settlement of Mirage 50 aircraft in the southern city of Punta Arenas.

Another effect that the transfer to the southern area would have would be the standardization of the camouflage schemes of Mirage 50FC aircraft with the air superiority scheme used by the 50C models. From 1987 they began to be painted with the characteristic gray colors, noting some details in the format of the numerals and their position, the painting of the blue rudder and the discontinuation of the use of the emblem of Group No. 4.



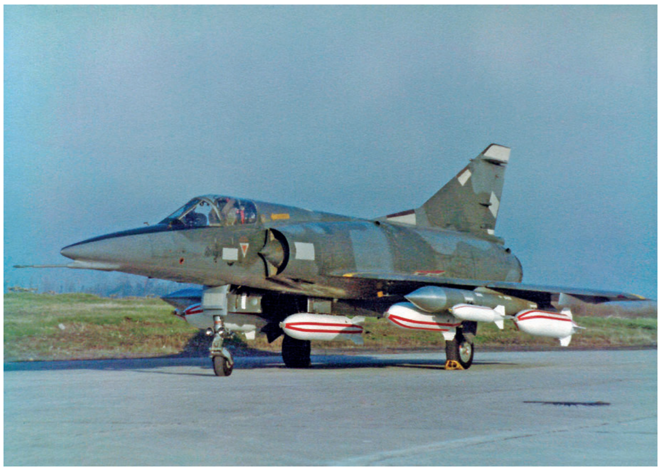
Mirage 50FC No. 505 operating in Chabunco with its new paint scheme and using its fortified hangars. (Rino Poletti B. collection)

The Cluster Bomb Fighter Bomber

The configuration of aircraft purchased from France did not consider for budgetary reasons the acquisition of missiles or launchable weapons, a very diametric aspect of purchases made by Peru or Argentina, which gave its Mirage 5P and Mirage IIIEA missiles and launchable armaments of French origin. In the case of the Peruvian Mirages, they counted from their entry into service in 1968 (Martello I) with AS.30 radio-guided commando missiles, Matra JL-100 launchers and other launchable weapons. In the Argentine case, the Trans-Andean deltas were equipped with Matra Magic R.550 and Matra R.530F missiles for air-to-air missions, the latter one of the most modern of its time. In the Chilean case, it opted for the integration of launchable systems of domestic production and the well-known Rafael Shafrir Mk.2 of Israeli origin, seeking to optimize resources and avoid long processes of approval of equipment.

Thus the Mirage of the Air Force in 1984 already integrated as main means of launchable cluster bombs manufactured by Cardoen Industries, models CB-130 and CB-500 (weight in pounds). These were presented to military authorities in launch exercises in Peldehue in the middle of that year. The bodies of both bombs were able to withstand up to 6 G sustained, which met the need for high-speed turns achieved by the Mirage.

In the case of the CB-130, the weapon had 50 bomblets while in the CB-500 it had a total of 240 bomblets inside. In this way, the main role of the Mirage 50 within the Air Force was that of attack and interdiction, being able to load five CB-500s and two CB-130s at their various weapons stations.



Mirage 50FC No. 506, conducting tests of Cardoen cluster bomb launches in Peldehue in 1984. (Rino Poletti B. collection)

With regard to Shafrir missiles, in March 1986 the first Mirage 50s with launchers on external pylons, intended to operate the aforementioned missile of Israeli origin, being the integration of the weapon part of the business that the Israeli military industry was beginning to develop in the Fleet of Mirage aircraft of the Chilean Air Force.

The Shafrir was a known missile, which was integrated from 1977 into the equipment inventory of Hunter aircraft. As a weapon, it required great pilot training for launch, because its maximum efficiency was achieved by being launched at six o'clock on the opposing aircraft. The chance of impact decreased dramatically to 40% if fired from another rear angle, being totally inefficient in front pitches. The missile via a light and audible signal, equipment that included the integration kit, indicated the best time to launch the missile.

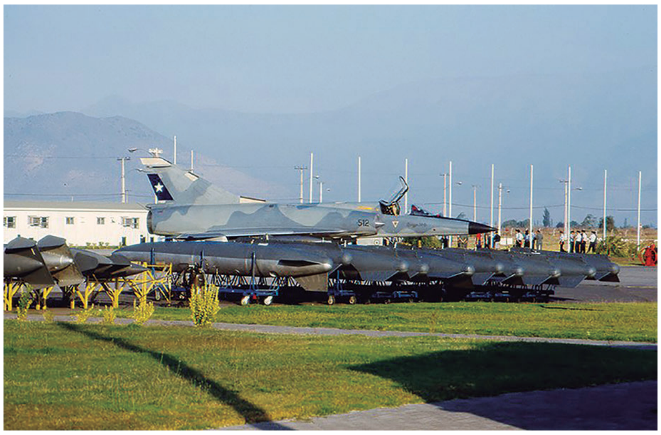
Supplementary tanks and standard sub wing configuration

The acquisition of the Mirage 50 considered the purchase of four additional fuel tank models, namely:

Model	Capacity (liters)	Features
RP30	1.700	For ferry flights.
RP6-III	1.300	Long-range flights and air-to-air patrol. Ability to withstand high G.
RP18 R	500	Supersonic capacity.
RPK-17	500	Kangaroo-type pendular tank, which could carry 4 free-fall bombs.

RPK supplementary tanks were designed specifically for the Mirage 5Js destined for Israel, and were subsequently adopted as standard equipment by all Mirage 5s produced. The Chilean Air Force used the RPK-17s within its ground attack configurations, both in its Mirage 50C and FC, this thanks to the station's fishing force being NATO standard of 14" and for which Cardoen CB bomb suspensions were approved. In this configuration, each RPK could mount two CB-500s and one CB-130, while the central weapons station was mounted a single 500-pound weapon. This configuration gave it a radius of action of 300 kilometers with the load described in a Hi-Lo-Hi flight.

Another configuration adopted by the Mirage 50 was two Shafrir missiles for self-defense and patrol, plus two RP6-III sub-range ponds which gave it a 500-kilometer radius of action in Hi-Hi-Hi profile with a 30-minute zone stay.



RP30 and RP6-III fuel tanks on Aviation Group No. 4 flight line in Pudahuel. (Via Dan Toro A.)

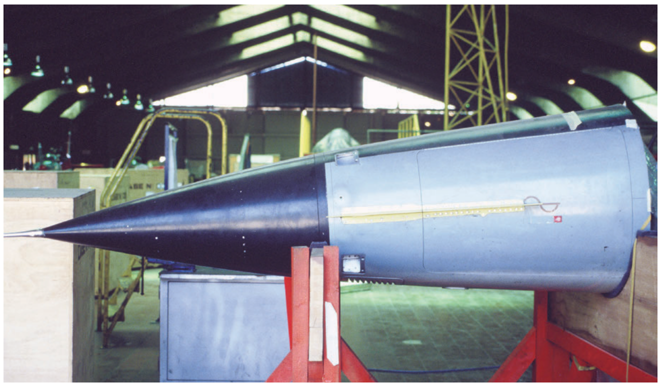
Project Bracket

514
Mirage 50C

After the completion of the South Atlantic Conflict, FACh's Combat Command begins a series of studies on the results of the operation of the Argentine Air Force's Dagger and Mirage IIIEA aircraft during the two-month conflict with England. It was not the first time the FACh had conducted such a study of Mirage aircraft. As far back as 1971, his Commander-in-Chief, Fernando Matthei Aubel, was on a mission to investigate and learn from the mouths of Israeli Air Force pilots, the pros and cons of the Dassault industry aircraft. Preliminary analysis agreed that the performance problem of Argentinian deltas was generated by operating aircraft to the limit of their radius of action in PAC missions or naval attack, without air refueling. In the air combat it lost this last aspect by being able to stay only a few minutes over the area of operations trying to find Sea Harrier's patrols. It was eventually detected that the Shafrir Mk.2 missile was not capable enough to face British aircraft carrying the Sidewinder AIM-9L, which was reinforced by the inability of Argentinian pilots to maintain control of the scenario and fall into the game of Royal Navy pilots operating at lower altitudes, subtracting maneuverability and several extra pounds of fuel from Argentine deltas.

In the early 1980s Israel Aircraft Industries Ltd (IAI) began offering a complete upgrade package for Mirage aircraft, which sought to match its performance with the IAI Kfir C2. One of the first interested in updating its deltas was the Argentine Air Force, which called its IAI Dagger's upgrade program Finger, being available by the date of the conflict with a first prototype. After the war, the Finger program underwent some changes, because some of the navigation and electronics were of British origin, which for obvious reasons could not be integrated into the aircraft.

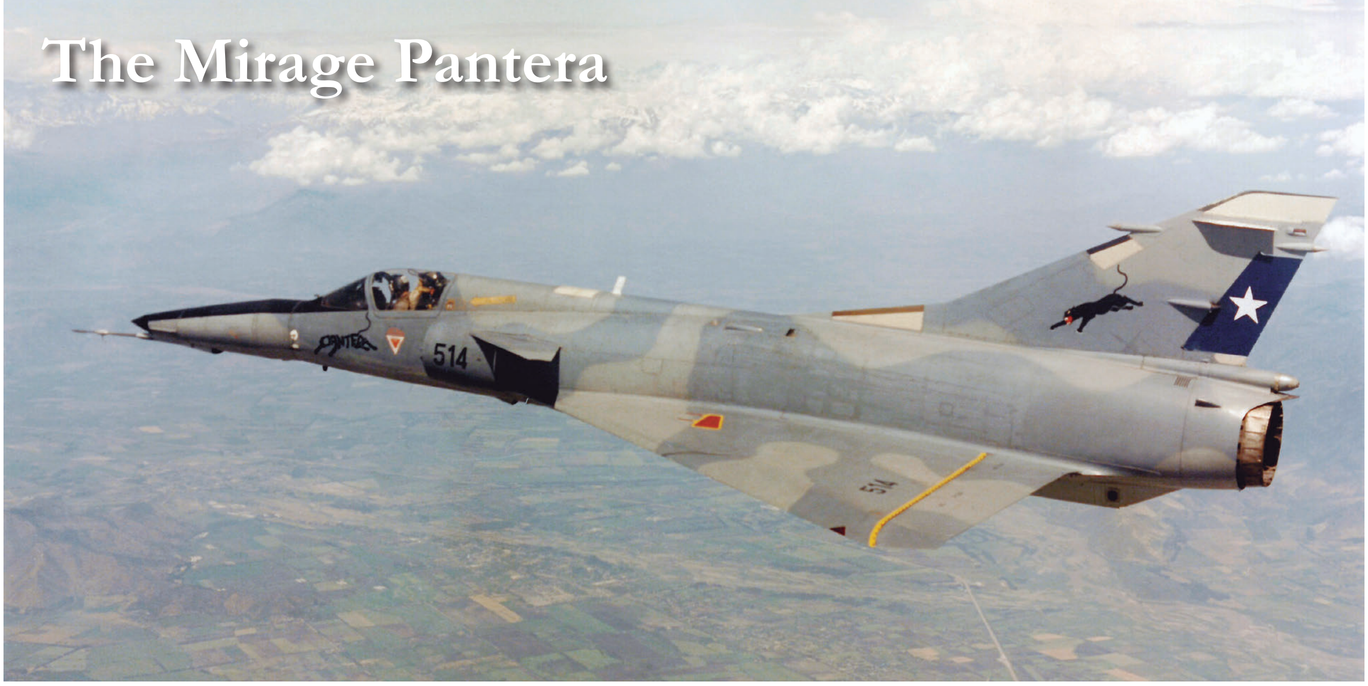
All lessons from the South Atlantic conflict and developments of Israel Aircraft Industries Ltd. were collected in Chile and reflected in a first modernization program known as Bracket, developed by the newly created National Aeronautics Company, ENAER, a direct descendant of the Maintenance Wing, under the advice and support of Israel Aircraft Industries Ltd. This first upgrade effort, made on the Mirage 50C No. 514, incorporated vortex-generating fillets behind the aircraft's radar cone and Canard fins. The 514 was used as an aerodynamic test bench, and was introduced during FIDA 1986 as Mirage 50CN.



Modified cone of the Mirage 50C No. 514, with the new vortex-generating fillets. (Via Javier Muñoz R.)

Mirage No. 514 is prepared for a test flight at El Bosque Air Base, in June 1986. (Via Javier Muñoz R.)

The Mirage Pantera



A new challenge for Chile's Aeronautical Industry

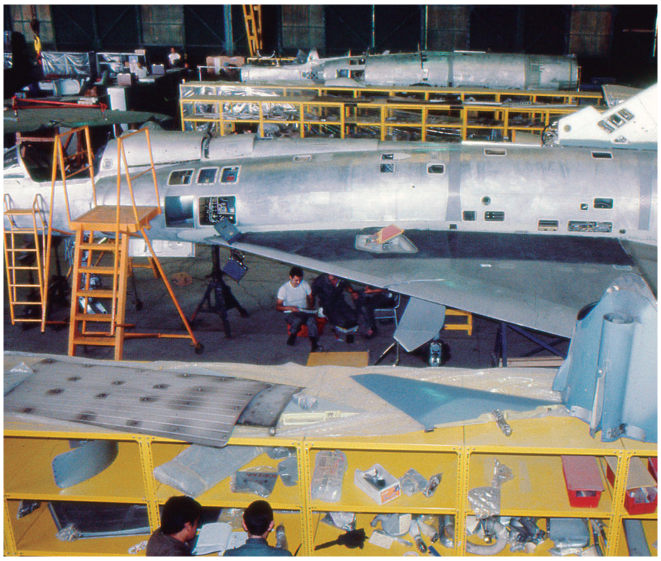
The effort made in the Project Bracket took on other nuances after 1986, and it was decided to carry out a complete modernization of the aircraft not only in its avionics and internal systems, but structural, turning the work on the Mirage 50 into the most complex and significant modernization project carried out in Chile to date.

The modernization considered integrating vortex-generating fillets into all aircraft on the nose of the aircraft and Canard fins, that reduced the takeoff run by 1,500 feet (about 450 m), replacing the landing gear with one similar to those used by IAI Kfir aircraft, in order to be able to lift heavier external loads, and integrating a new nose section, Kfir style that extended its nose by one meter in length. This change, the most noticeable of those made, allowed the integration of navigation equipment of British origin and the integration of a new radar, the ELTA EL/M2001B manufactured in Israel. The first aircraft to integrate all these changes was the same Mirage 50C No. 514 previously used as an aerodynamic test bench, presented on October 14, 1988 under the name Pantera.

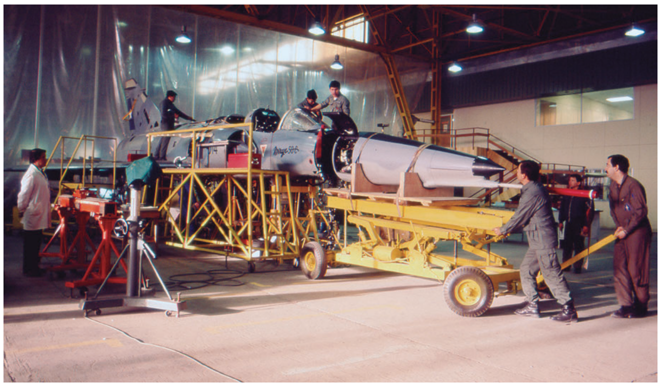
The head of the project by IAI in Chile was the current Director of Operations of IAI, Beni Manes. A mechanical engineer by profession, the Israeli was a key figure in the development of the first Panther, bringing out his vast experience and knowledge on delta-wing platforms, having participated in the successful modernization program developed in South Africa on the Mirage III platform.

Apart from the structural modifications of the aircraft that made it much more capable than the original Mirage 50, perhaps the most important part of the Panther Project was its ELTA EL/M2001B radar, a small telemetric type radar developed by ELTA in the early 1970s with air-to-air and air-to-ground capability, whose form factor is type of "cone trunk" and which integrates seven modules and the antenna radar in its front. One of its biggest flaws was its antenna, which was fixed providing a maximum range of no more than 30 km in air-to-air missions, not being able to surpass the French AGAVE team in interception functions.

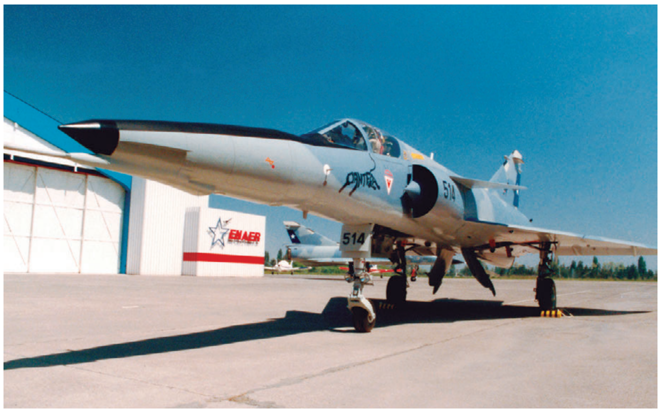
Its highest performance was obtained in ground attack operations by integrating CCIP or "Continuous Calculated Impact Point" mode that allowed its weaponry to be unloaded almost without missing a target. In both air-to-air and air-to-ground modes, the acquisition of a target was automatic and the data presented on a multifunction display on the left inside the cockpit and the aircraft's HUD. It is not known why this system was selected instead of the French radar.



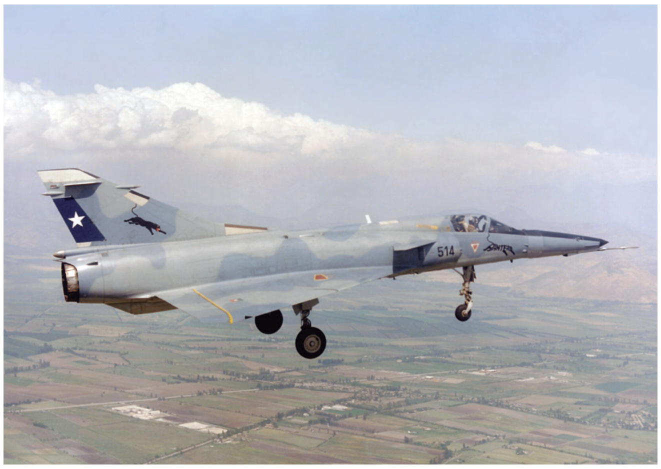
The Mirage 50C No. 514, which had been a test bench for the Project Bracket, is now undergoing modifications to the Project Pantera in February 1987, becoming the prototype of the project. (Via Javier Muñoz R.)



ENAER specialists proceeded to fix the new nose in the fuselage of aircraft No. 514, in July 1988, only a few months from the roll-out scheduled for October of that year. (Mario Magliochetti O.)



Roll-Out of the Mirage Pantera on October 14, 1988, with its new scheme, which included the name Panther with the shape of the feline on both sides of the bow and a black panther on both sides of the vertical stabilizer. (Chilean Aeronautical Museum)



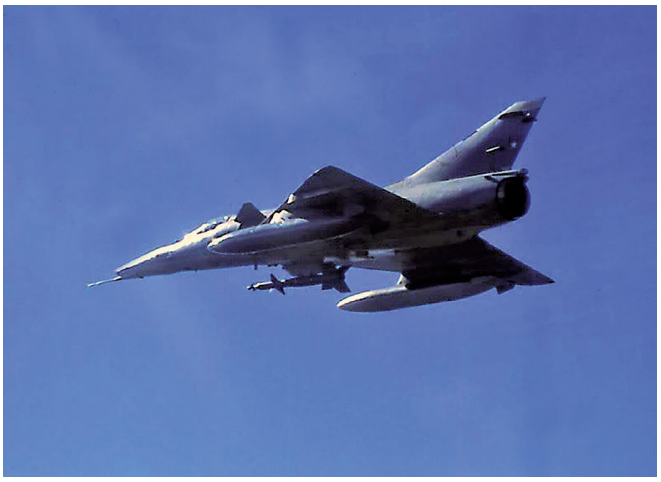
The Mirage Pantera prototype, performing one of its first test flights at the controls of an IAI test pilot. (Rino Poletti B. collection)

Initially, the Panther continued to operate with the Shafrir Mk.2, but in the early 1990s efforts began to integrate a new air-to-air missile, using a new Raphael product, Python III. The Python III is based on the Shafrir series, entering service in the mid-1980s in Israel. It has an all-looking IR search engine that can be enslaved to the radar and a launch capacity of 30°, where depending on its altitude, its effective range varied between 5 and 15 km. The launch tests of this missile, carried out from the Panther No. 514, were carried out in 1993 from Los Condores Air Base, homologated and subsequently integrated into the entire Panther fleet.

IAI representatives, along with Israeli test pilot and Squadron Commander Jorge Rojas Ávila, posing after the in-flight presentation of the Mirage Pantera. (Rino Poletti B. collection)

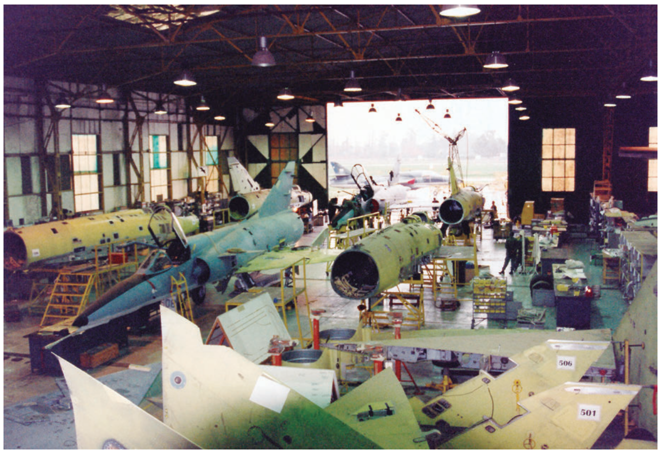
On the same date, the option to integrate laser weaponry for the Mirages that were completing their modernization process is also evaluated. The inability to obtain laser guided bombs (LGBs) in the United States caused FACh to evaluate a modernization kit for General Purpose Mk.82/Mk.83 and Mk.84 bombs that Israel Aerospace Industries developed in late 1980s. This kit called Griffin contained a seeker or searching head and a series of moving and rigid fins (four in the front section of the bomb and four in the rear section), plus the corresponding weapons stations than by the dimensions of the bomb fins, had a higher height and shape different from those used by a general purpose bomb.

Such weapons and supports were installed at the front weapons stations, located below the air intakes. By early 1995 the LGB Griffins became part of the Panther's weapons inventory and were subsequently adopted by the M-5M Elkan. One of the most notorious qualities of this weapon was that it allowed the Chilean Air Force to develop precision Stand-Off attacks by having a range of 10 km, albeit with a number of restrictions, the main being the illumination of the targets in bad weather conditions, an CEP of 8 meters and the need to use as a lighting platform one of the two dual Panthers as the origin of the laser beam.



One of the few photographs, actually a capture from a video, of a Mirage Panther carrying Griffin bombs. (Via Lionel Zepeda L.)

Regarding aircraft electronics, it integrated more evolved versions of the Caiquén and Eclipse developed in the early 1980s by the Electronics Department of the Chilean Air Force Research Directorate. These developments were taken over by the company Desarrollo de Tecnologías y Sistemas (DTS) who integrated into the two products mentioned above a complete suite of electronic counter-measures developed locally. This suite was referred to as DM/A-401 and was the last component intended for the protection of the aircraft in the electronic aspect.



Production line of the Project Pantera, where you can identify the modification of Mirage 50FC No. 501, 506 and 508 aircraft. These aircraft were the last to be modified towards the end of the 1990s, with No. 501 closing the project in 2001. (Rino Poletti B. collection)

Following the presentation and delivery of the Mirage 50CN Pantera prototype during October 1988, the project suffered a series of delays that during July 1991 generated a series of questions and doubts about the continuity of the project. In this sense and during the same month, the Director of the National Aeronautical Company (ENAER) General of Aviation (I) Caupolicán Boisset Mujica, had to deny that the cancellation of the project was being evaluated, indicating that the same "It is in full execution, but delayed", this in response when consulted by the specialized press on versions that all the work would suffer from execution problems. To date and three years after the presentation of the prototype, only one modernized aircraft flew, an aspect that generated a series of doubts within the experts.

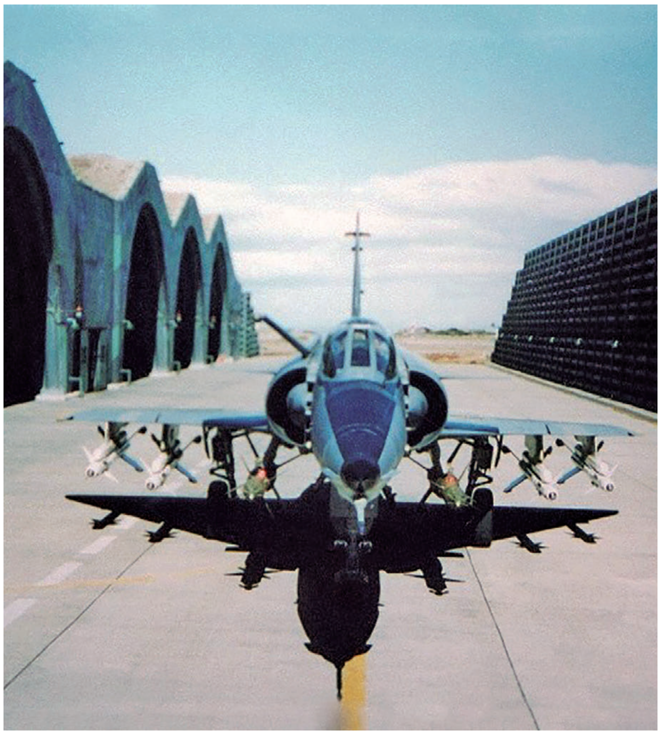
In this regard, FACh and ENAER argued that the delays were due to three new projects under implementation that were carried out on other institutional platforms and the annexes incorporated into the integration and adaptation of Canard fins, which required "extending the implementation deadlines". To silence the doubts, the Director of ENAER ended up declaring that the second aircraft would be available from November 1992 inviting the press to tour the hangar where the preparation of the second aircraft was carried out, so that they would find that the work continued.

One aspect that led to delays throughout the project was that no Mirage 50 was the same as the other, so each modernized aircraft was a unique project and where national engineering and maintenance processes were tested. On the other hand, the international aeronautical market was beginning to open for the southern cone of America, starting an offer of material available at very low cost to which the Air Force was not indifferent. This was the main reason for the delay and at the same time the least treated. The modernization of a Mirage 50 to the Panther standard involved an investment per plane close to $14 million, a fairly high investment considering the age of the radar, and that an F-16A of the first blocks in the early 1990s was possible to get $20 million a unit, including training and training of its crews.

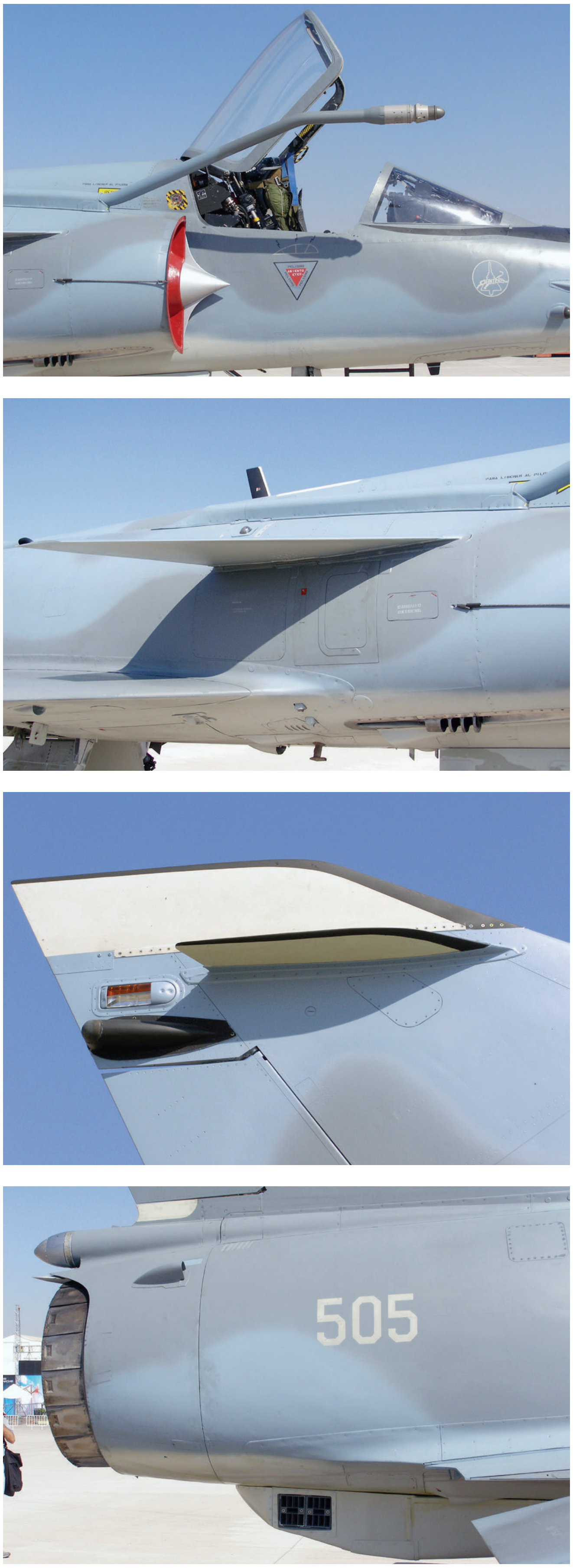
The information known to this day speaks that despite the high cost of modernization, the Air Force command decided to continue the course of the project, both by the clauses signed with IAI Bedek, which involved fines and for other programs in development that could be affected by a cancellation (Tiger II Plus, IAI Phalcon and Eagle Program).

In this sense, on March 10, 1992, it was first presented in public, the second modernized aircraft, asserting in that presentation that four Mirages already existed in inventory completely modernized in Chile (Figure that contradicted the statement of the Director of ENAER of July 1991). As of that date, work took on another pace, with more than 8 aircraft taken to the new standard by September 1994.

A symbol aircraft within the modernization project was the Mirage 50C No. 513, nicknamed "El Patricio Yáñez", in reference to the former player of the football club Universidad de Chile, who permanently went injured and offside due to various inconveniences. This aircraft after being modernized presented a number of problems that forced constant visits to ENAER in Santiago for reviews and adjustments.

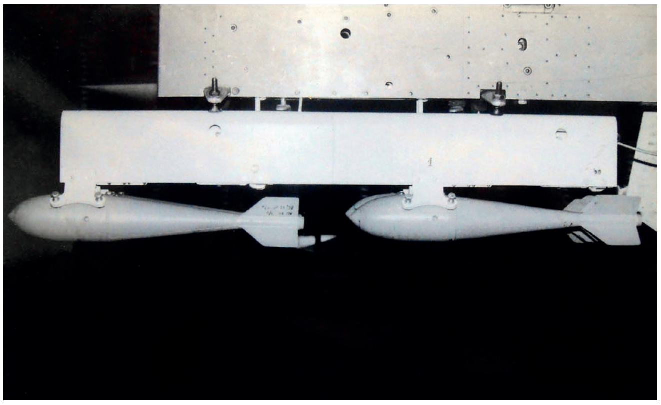


A configuration to take into account, the Mirage Pantera No. 514, armed with 2 Griffin bombs and 4 Python 3 missiles. (Via Lionel Zepeda L.)



Mirage 50CN Pantera No. 505 (c/n 16) at FIDAE 2006, showing some of its main modifications: Air fuel replenishment launch, Canard configuration, Radar Warning Receiver and DM/A-401 Electronic Counter-Measurement Dispenser. (Raúl Zamora M.)

Approval and integration of equipment and armaments was not restricted to products offered by Israeli industry, in this case IAI. The Project Pantera had already integrated DTS's national electronic counter-measures systems and by the mid-1990s a practice bomb was developed locally with a profile more suited to the high speeds of the Mirage and which could eventually replace the BDU-33. The ingenuity was developed by armament engineer Lionel Zepeda Lamiothe, who was in charge of the approval of the various weapons platforms of the project Pantera. For three years these national practice bombs were used.

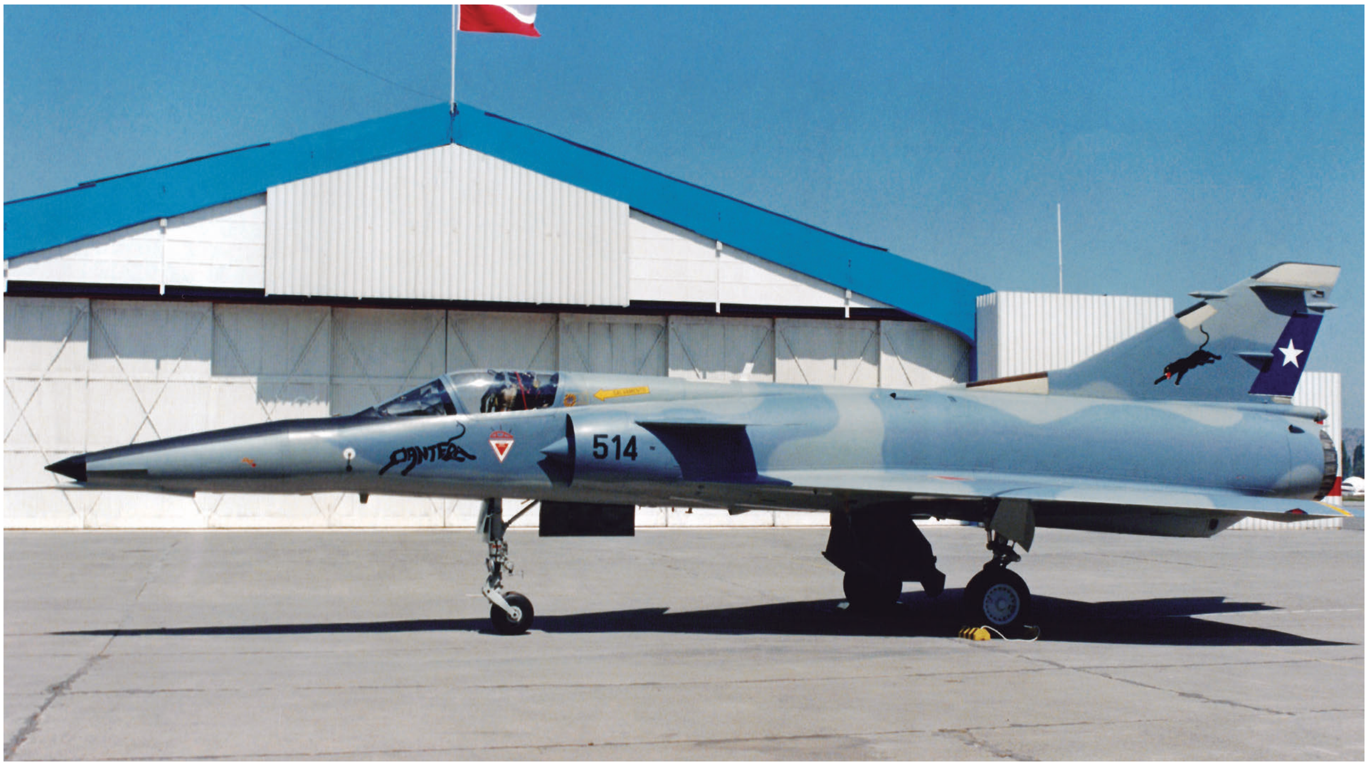


Domestic practice bombs could withstand speeds of up to 1,111.2 k/h (600 knots). (Via Lionel Zepeda L.)

SALVAMENTO
514

The engineers, Captains Jorge Tapia and Lionel Zepeda in charge of the approval of armaments of Panther No. 514. (Via Lionel Zepeda L.)

ENAER specialists along with Israeli IAI technicians pose at Mirage 50CN Pantera No. 514. (Via Lionel Zepeda L.)

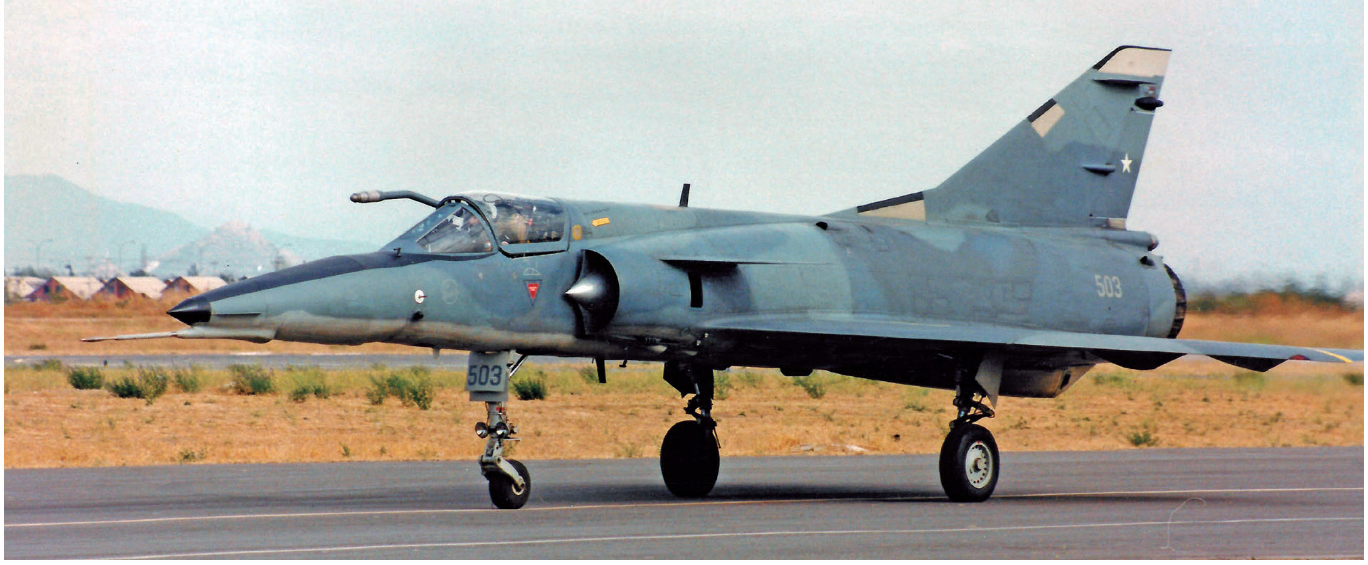


Beautiful photograph of the prototype of the Mirage 50CN Pantera No. 514, officially presented on October 14, 1988. This aircraft would be the platform to evaluate several weapons systems that would then be deployed on the rest of the aircraft of the fleet. (Patrick Laureau)

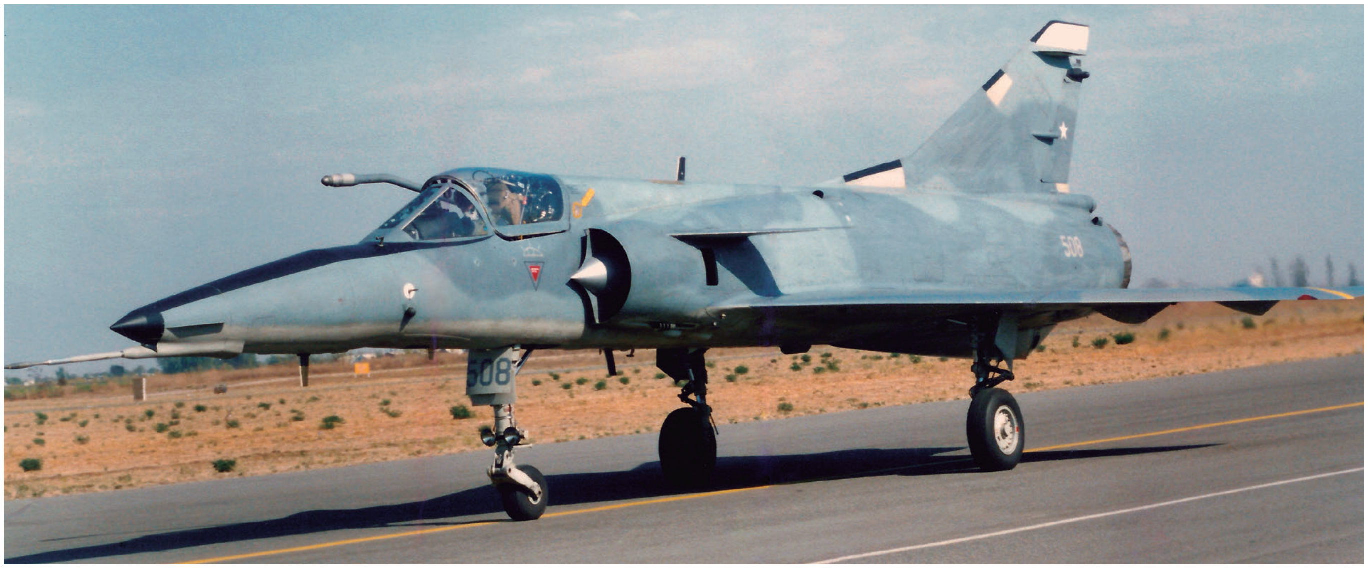
Mirage 50DCN Pantera No. 515, photographed during its transfer to Brazil to participate in the Cruzex 2002 exercise. (Rino Poletti B. collection)

The first modified Mirage 50FC was No. 503, after a long wait at ENAER to be recovered from its accident on September 20, 1984. (Mauricio Ithurbisquy D.)

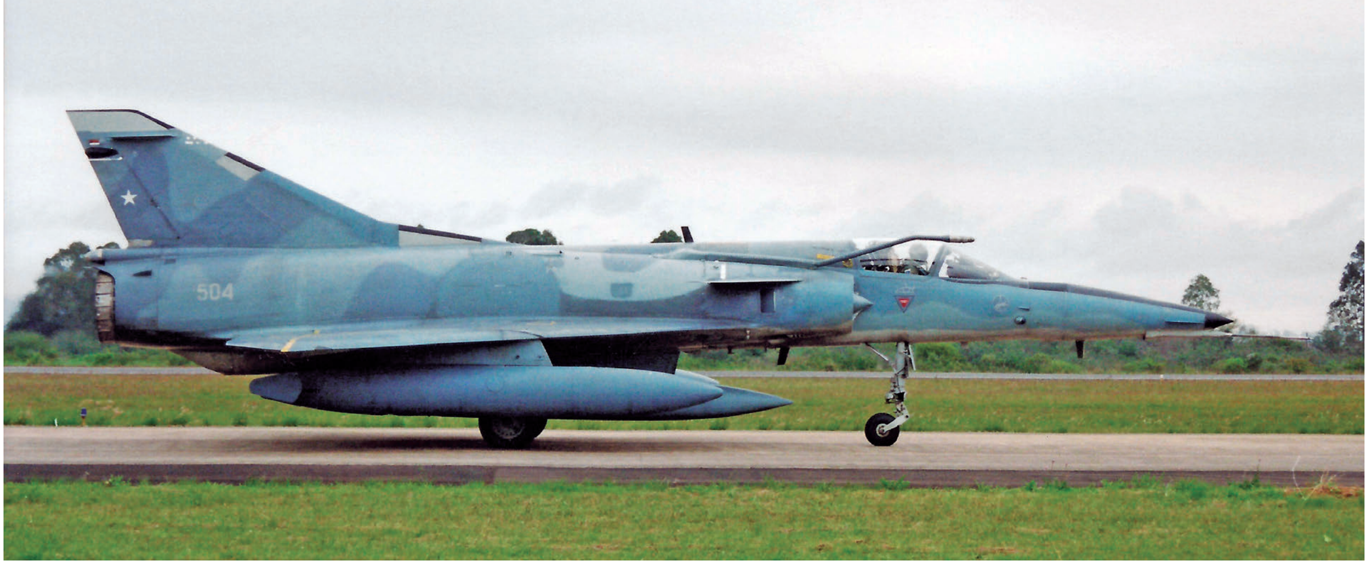
Panther No. 503 is sprayed with sparkling wine before making its first test flight in September 1995. (Mauricio Ithurbisquy D.)



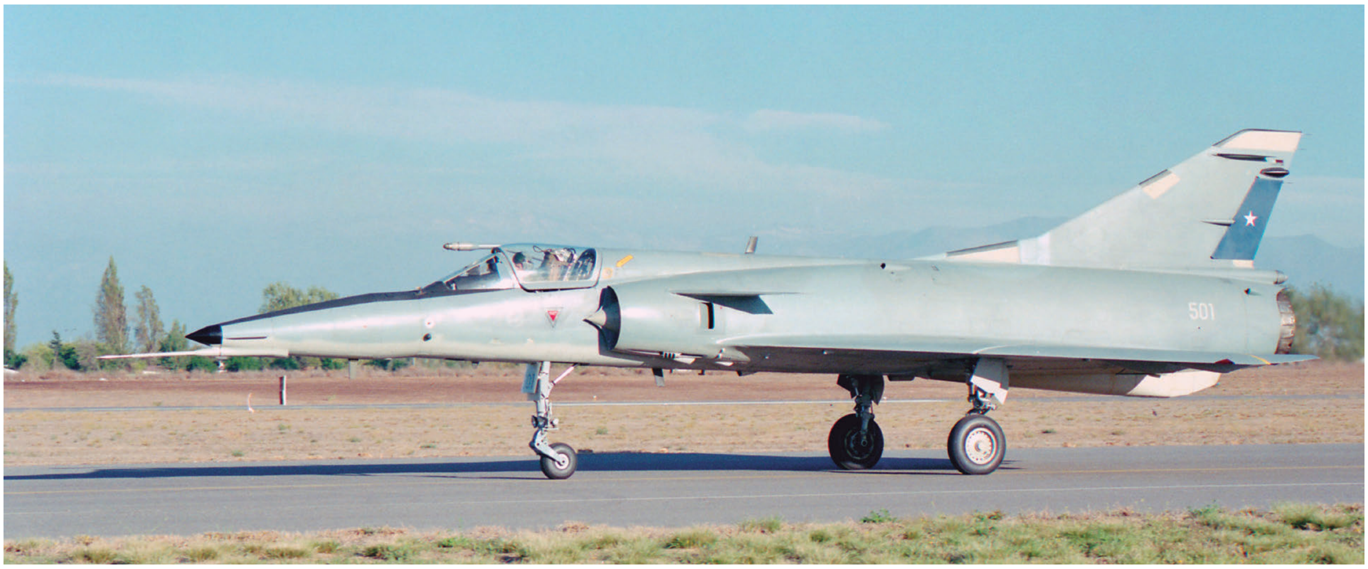
Mirage Pantera No. 503 moving to the head of the runway to start one of its presentations at FIDAE 1996, at Los Cerrillos Air Base. It was the first Mirage 50FC to receive the Panther modification in 1995. (Rino Poletti B. collection)



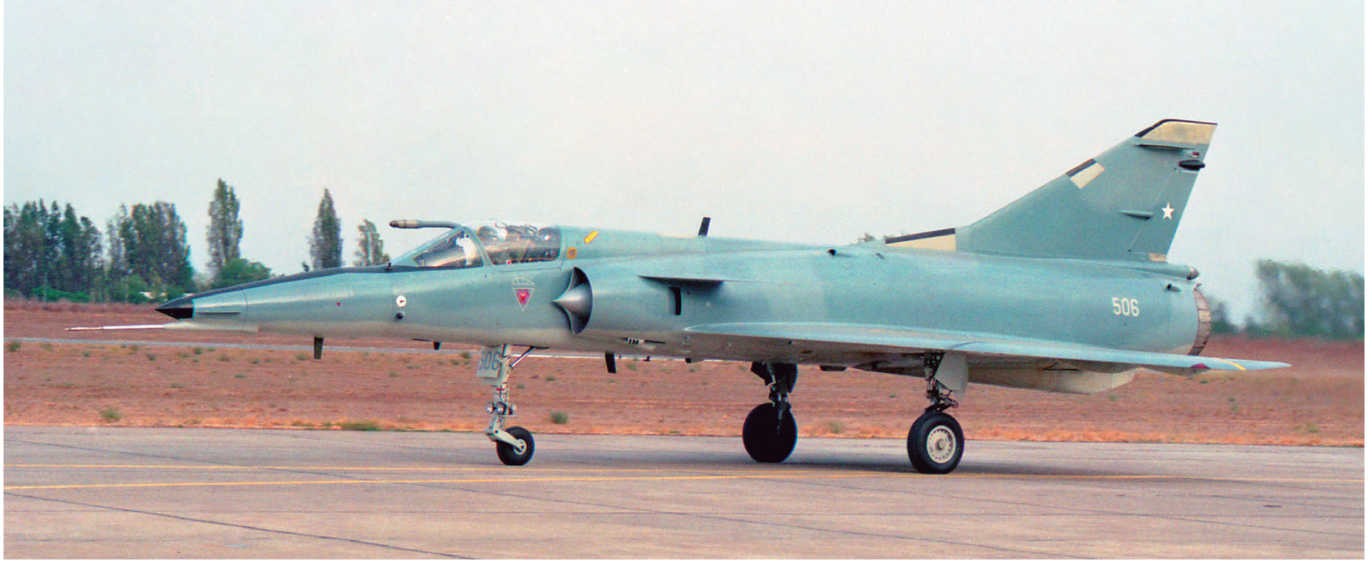
Mirage Pantera No. 508 taxiing to start one of its presentations at FIDAE 2000, at Los Cerrillos Air Base. Sports the first paint scheme. (Rino Poletti B collection)



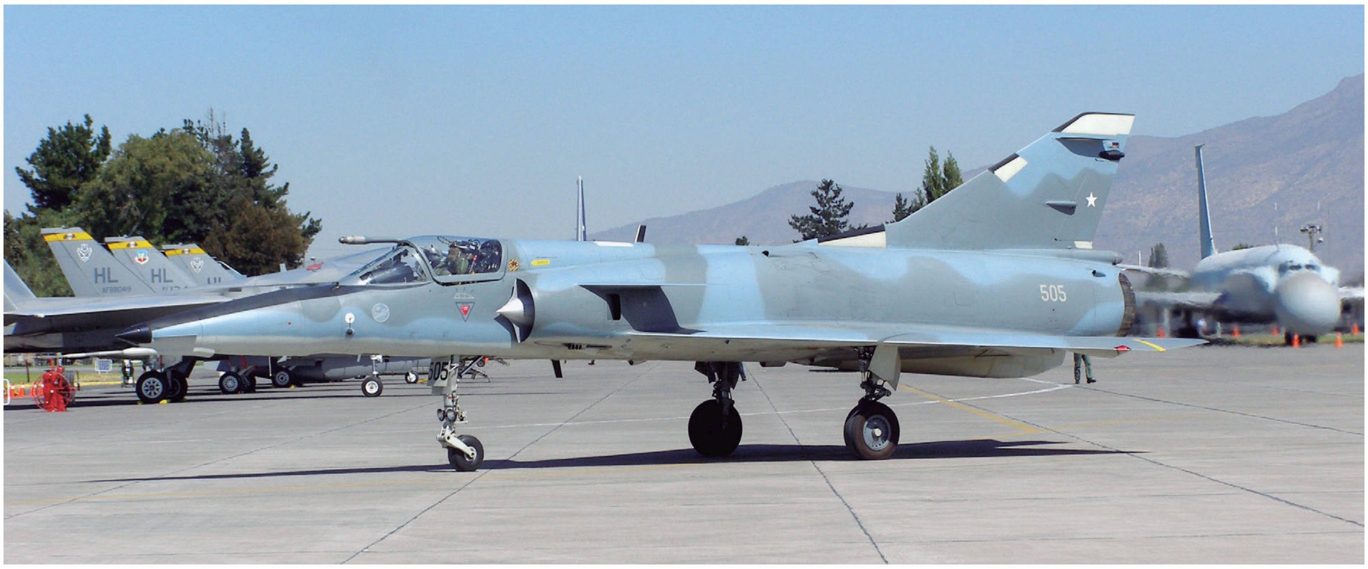
Mirage Pantera No. 504 taxiing to start his transfer back to Chile, having successfully participated in the Cruzex Exercise 2002, in Brazil. (Rino Poletti B collection)



Mirage Pantera No. 501 taxiing to start one of its presentations at FIDAE 2004, at Los Cerrillos Air Base. Go in clean configuration and sports the latest paint scheme with the rudder painted in blue. (Alvaro Romero P.)



Mirage Pantera No. 501 in demand of the runway head to start one of its presentations at FIDAE 2004, at Los Cerrillos Air Base. It still sports the first paint scheme. (Alvaro Romero P.)



Mirage Pantera No. 505 leaving the flight line to start one of its presentations at FIDAE 2006, at Pudahuel Air Base. Sports the latest paint scheme, with the steering rudder unpainted. (Raúl Zamora M.)

Long-range deployments and last years of operation

Along with the delivery of the first Mirage Pantera production (No. 510), the air refueling probe is integrated, capacity that can be used from 1996 with the incorporation of the tanker "Eagle". However, aviation group No. 7 F-5E/Fs were the first aircraft to carry out long-range deployments thanks to this new capability, while the Mirage Panteras had to wait until 2002, participating in the CRUZEX 2002 Exercise in Brazil, with a flock of 4 aircraft, in which the former 50FC No 504 and 508 participated, carrying out air refueling over Argentine territory in its mission of self-transfer to the Air Base of Canoas in Brazil.

Formation of Pantera aircraft during their transfer to participate in the Cruzex Exercise 2002, at the Air Base of Canoas, Brazil. (Rino Poletti B. collection)

At the beginning of the new century, the Project Pantera ended with the delivery of Mirage No. 501 in 2001 and which would be presented at FIDAE 2002. The high operating costs of Mirage's fleet forced the Chilean Air Force High Command to take a look at the international market, where attractive front-line aircraft offerings such as the F-16 and Mirage 2000 were attractive. Meanwhile, in 2003 five Atlas Cheetah E aircraft are purchased for spare parts and where the "Soute AR" (Ventral Fairing) of these aircraft are used, which incorporated an electronic counter-measures kit. Finally, on December 28, 2007, the last official flight of the Mirage Panteras was made, being mostly transferred to Santiago for storage.

On January 4, 2008, the last flight of a Mirage ex Armée de l'Air, corresponding to Mirage Pantera No. 504 (No. 8), is recorded during the transfer of the last two aircraft (515 and 504) from Chabunco Air Base in Punta Arenas to El Bosque Air Base in Santiago, piloted by Squadron Commander Francisco Pizarro Aste.

These aircraft, along with the rest of the fleet, were preserved in the Supply Wing at El Bosque Air Base, waiting for a prospective buyer. Currently, the former Armée de l'Air No. 5 (Pantera No. 503) and 30 (Pantera No. 508) are on display at the Aeronautical Museum and Chabunco Air Base, respectively.

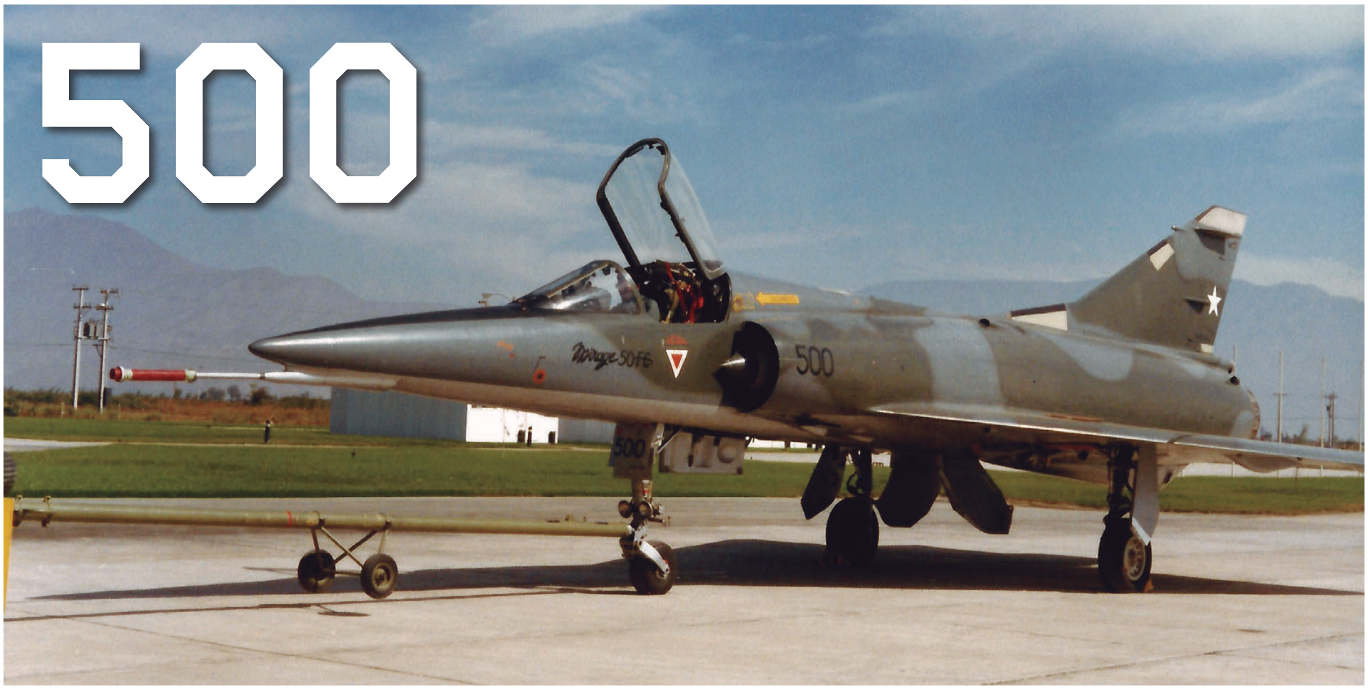
FACh Mirages fleet features and details summary

#	N° FACh	Serial	Model	Start of Service	End of Service
1	500 – 508	30	50FC	1980 – G.4	28-12-2007 – Monument at Chabunco Airbase.
2	501	1	50FC	1980 – G.4	28-12-2007 – Stored at Chabunco Airbase.
3	502	3	50FC	1980 – G.4	00-00-2003 – Preserved at Chabunco Airbase.
4	503	5	50FC	1980 – G.4	28-12-2007 – Donated to the Aeronautics and Space Museum of Chile.
5	504	8	50FC	1980 – G.4	28-12-2007 – Stored at Supply Wing, El Bosque Airbase.
6	505	16	50FC	1980 – G.4	28-12-2007 – Stored at Pudahuel Airbase.
7	506	23	50FC	1980 – G.4	28-12-2007 – Stored at Supply Wing, El Bosque Airbase.
8	507	28	50FC	1980 – G.4	11-03-1993 – Destroyed in accident.
9	509	51	50C	1982 – G.4	00-00-2002 – Cannibalized, sold as scrap.
10	510	52	50C	1982 – G.4	28-12-2007 – Donated to the Specialty School, El Bosque Airbase.
11	511	53	50C	1982 – G.4	18-06-1989 – Destroyed in accident.
12	512	54	50C	1982 – G.4	00-00-2005 – Monument in the FACh corporative building, Los Cerrillos Airbase.
13	513	55	50C	1982 – G.4	28-12-2007 – Monument in Punta Arenas city.
14	514	56	50C	1982 – G.4	28-12-2007 – Stored at Supply Wing, El Bosque Airbase.
15	515	57	50DC	1982 – G.4	28-12-2007 – Donated to the Aeronautics and Space Museum of Chile.
16	516	58	50DC	1982 – G.4	29-12-1983 – Destroyed in accident.
17	516	3F/1VA	50DC	1987 – G.4	28-12-2007 – Stored at Supply Wing, El Bosque Airbase.

ADLA and FACh Operating Units

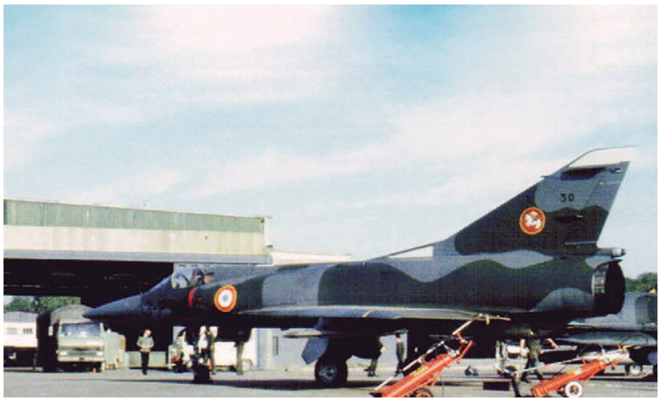
c/n	Model	Armée de l'Air		Model	Chilean Air Force
		2/13	3/13		Aviation Group No. 4
1	5F	13-PG		50FC/50CN	501
3	5F		13-SR	50FC/50CN	502
5	5F	13-PL		50FC/50CN	503
8	5F	13-PQ		50FC/50CN	504
16	5F		13-SC	50FC/50CN	505
23	5F	13-PS		50FC/50CN	506
28	5F		13-SH/13-SP	50FC/50CN	507
30	5F	13-PT		50FC/50CN	500/508

500



Mirage 5J

This 5J series aircraft was built for the Israeli Air Force, number 30. It made his first test flight on 11 October 1968 by Dassault test pilot Marcel Tixador.



Presentation of Mirage 5F No. 30, 13-PT, in Toul airbase, June 1978. (André Didion)

Mirage 5F

After the embargo imposed by President De Gaulle on Israel, this plane was stored in the EAA 601 Transfer Unit of Châteaudun Air Base on 14 May 1973, until 5 January 1976.

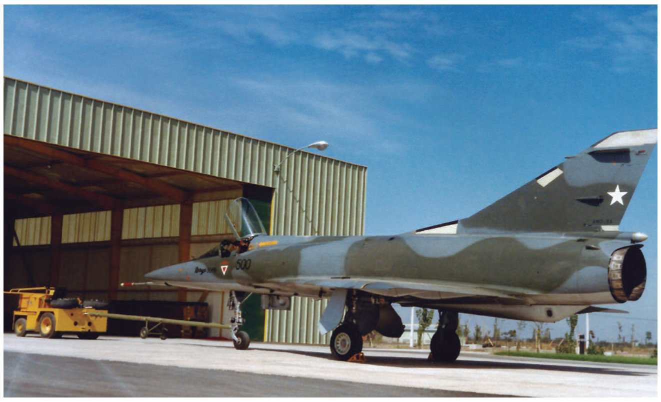
Then it was sent for a couple of weeks, until 21 January 1976, to the AIA 584 Industrial Aeronautics Workshop to be converted to model 5F, replacing its Atar 9C-5 engine with the 9C-7, as well as its starting engine (compressed air to electric). It also received the new camouflage scheme. Once modified and painted it was sent back to the EAA 601 Transfer Unit for storage until 10 May 1977.

Service in the Armée de l'Air

Once removed from storage, this plane was incorporated into the French Air Force on 24 November 1977, to the 2/13 Alps Fighter Squadron, where it sported the 13-PT numeral, until 22 May 1979, when it was acquired by AMD/BA, to be modified to the Mirage 50 standard and sold to the Chilean Air Force. At the time of the withdrawal of the Armée de l'Air, this plane recorded 393:00 flight hours.

Mirage 50FC

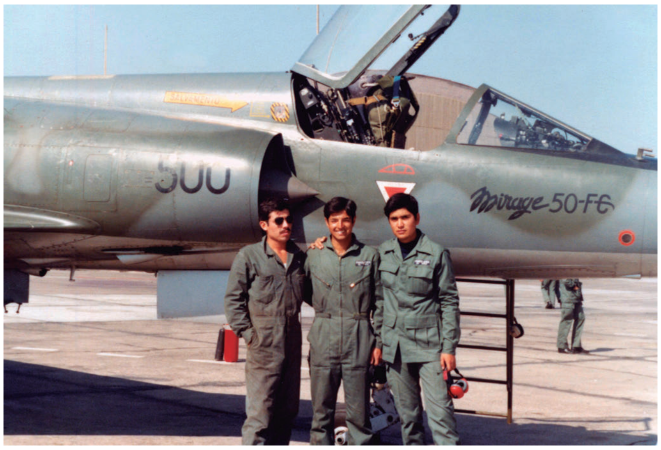
Mirage 5F No. 30 was modified to the M50 standard, receiving its new Atar 9K-50 engine and communications and navigation equipment required by the Chilean Air Force. It kept the paint scheme used by the Armée de l'Air, as well as the French stencils. The white star was added to the rudder and received the 500 series. The variant name "Mirage 50" is also added to both sides of the bow, below the cockpit, like most Dassault export aircraft.



Mirage 50FC No. 500, being towed into a hangar at Pudahuel Air Force Base, during beginning of Group No. 4 operations. (Germán Lüer M.)

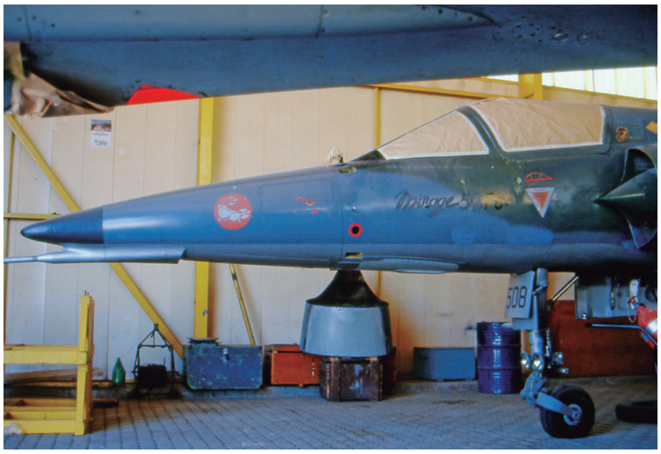
Service in the Chilean Air Force

Mirage 50FC No. 500 was delivered on 26 June 1980 and was assigned to the Aviation Group No. 4, along with the other seven planes purchased. It was transported disassembled by air from France and assembled in Chile by specialists of the Chilean Air Force, with the advice of Dassault technicians.


Author (Julio Arróspide, left) with his friends René Pérez Rojas and Manuel Gómez, posing in front of No. 500 at the end of 1981, during an institutional exercise at Cerro Moreno Air Base. (Via Julio Arróspide R.)

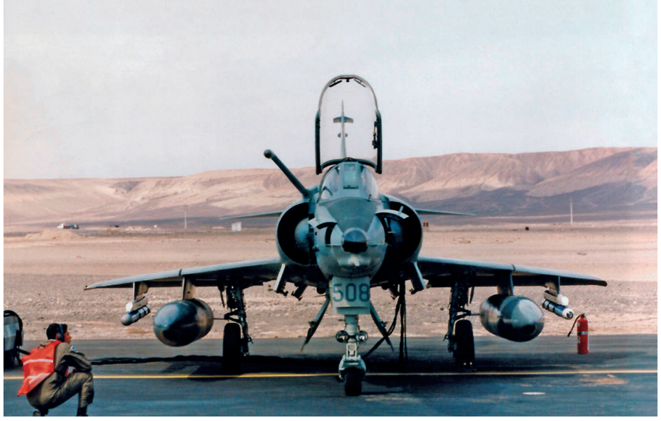
Mirage 50FC No. 500 operated mainly in the base of Aviation Group No. 4 at Pudahuel Air Base, carrying out deployments from 1981 to different parts of Chile to operate with other combat aircraft and gain experience in the role assigned to the fleet. At the end of 1981, its FACh serial number was changed to No. 508, under a rule that eliminated double zero numerals from the entire fleet of institutional planes.

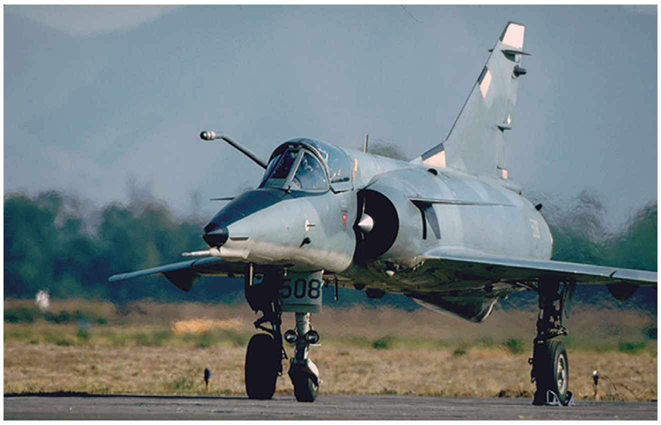
In 1986 it was transferred to the new settlement site of Aviation Group No. 4, at Chabunco Air Base, Punta Arenas. Shortly after operating in the Austral zone, it received a new aerial superiority paint scheme, similar to Mirage 50C/DC planes, arrived in 1983. The pattern of the scheme and the colors were very similar; however, the numerals did not follow the French standard, applying thicker lines.

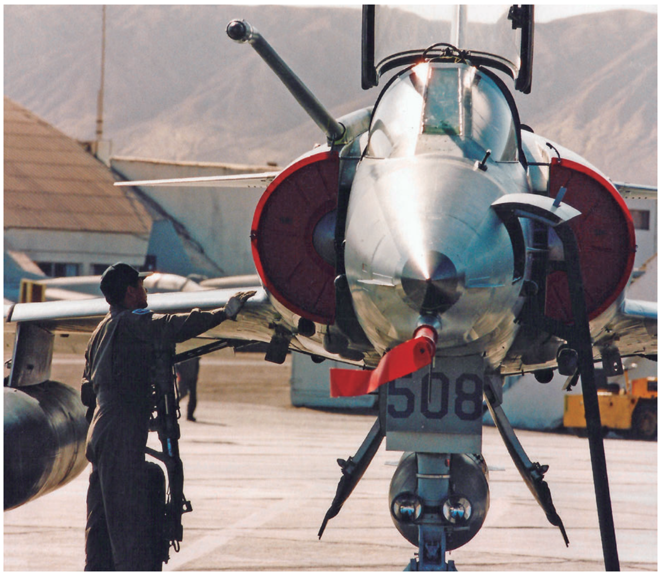

Mirage 50FC No. 508 in the painting workshop of ENAER, June 1986, sporting the second painting scheme. (Via Javier Muñoz R.)

Pantera

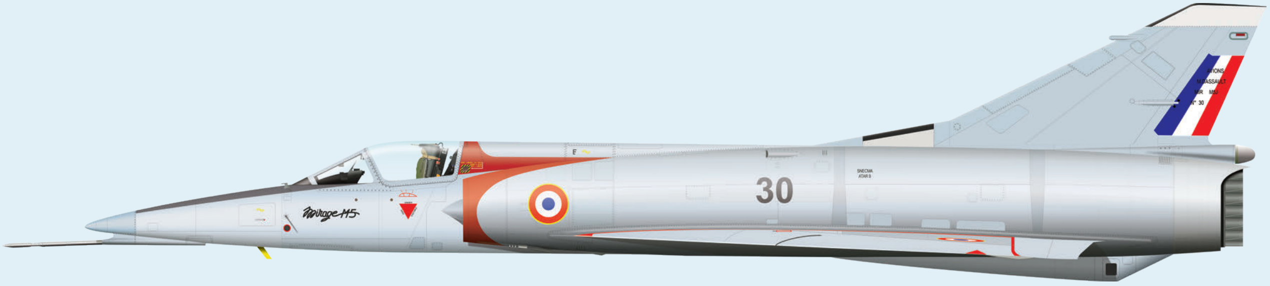
This Mirage 50FC was converted to the Pantera standard in the late 1990s. In 2002 it took part in the Cruzex Exercise in Brazil. It continued to fly in Aviation Group No. 4 until the end of his operational life in 2007. It is currently found as a monument at Chabunco Air Force Base, sporting the latest scheme used by these plane.


Pantera No. 508 during "Ciclón I" (Cyclone I) Chilean Air Force joint exercise in 1996 at Cerro Moreno Air Base. (Rino Poletti B. collection)

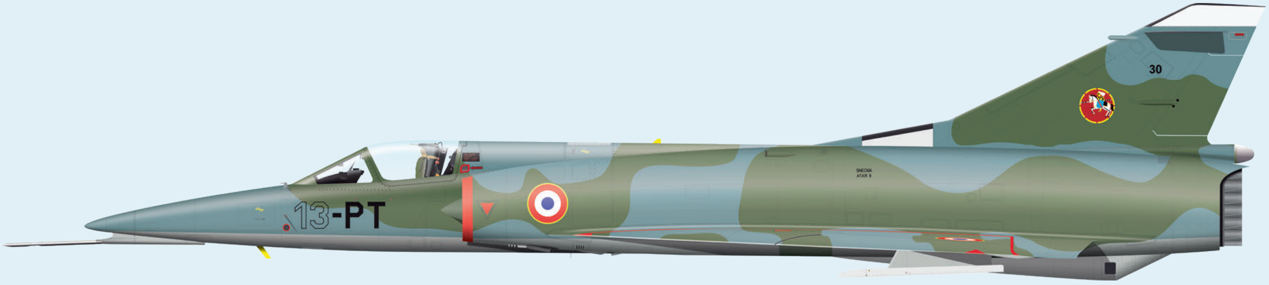

Pantera N. 508 sporting the first painting scheme during the FIDAE 2000. (Alessandro Bocca P. collection)


A Crew Chief performs a preflight inspection to Pantera No. 508 at Cerro Moreno Air Force Base, 1996. (Rino Poletti B. collection)

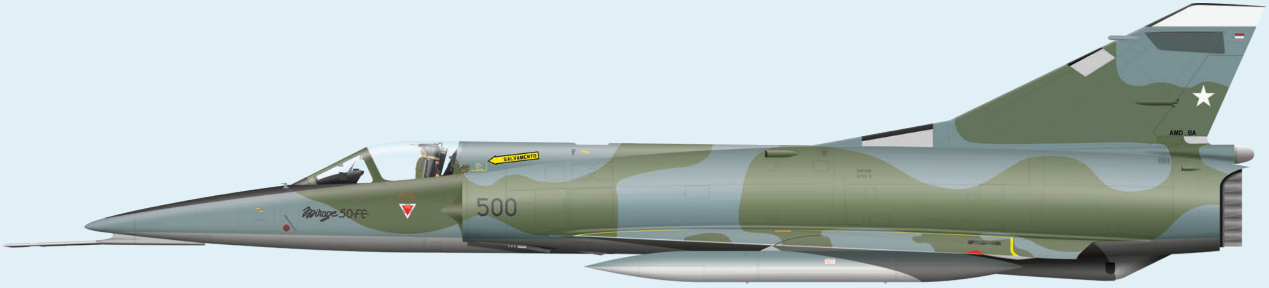
Mirage 5J, c/n 30, Israeli Air Force, November de 1968.



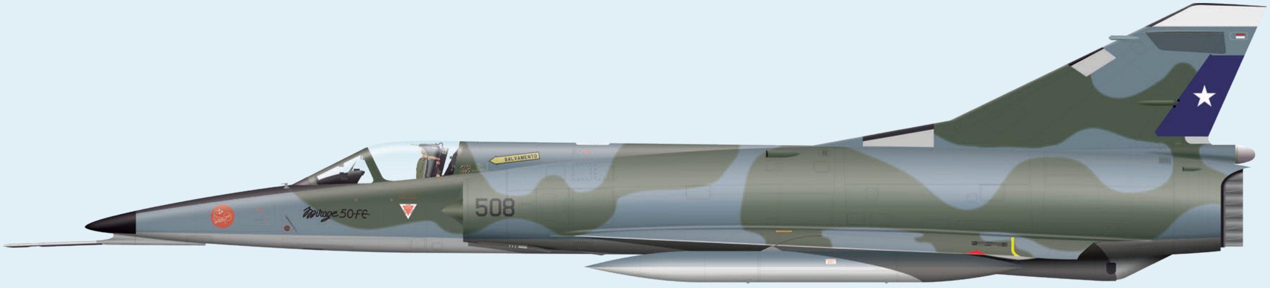
Mirage 5F, 13-PT, Fighter Squadron 2/13 Alpes, Armée de l'Air, Toul-Rosières Airbase, 1978.



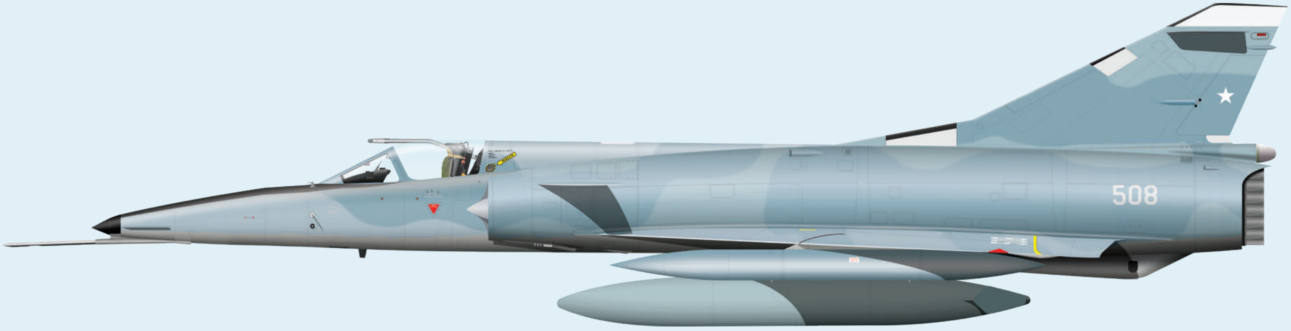
Mirage 50FC, No. 500, Aviation Group No. 4, Chilean Air Force, Pudahuel Airbase, Santiago, 1980.

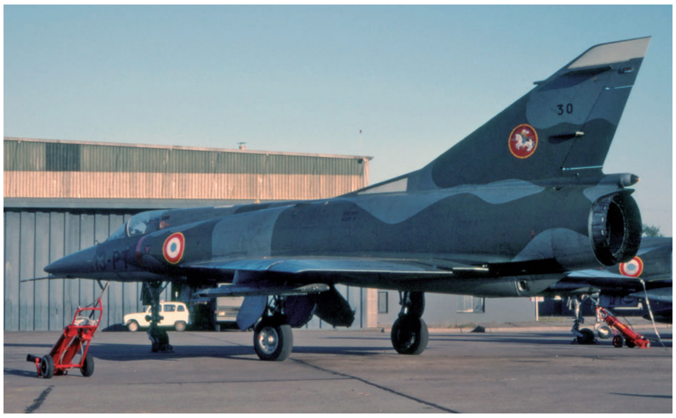


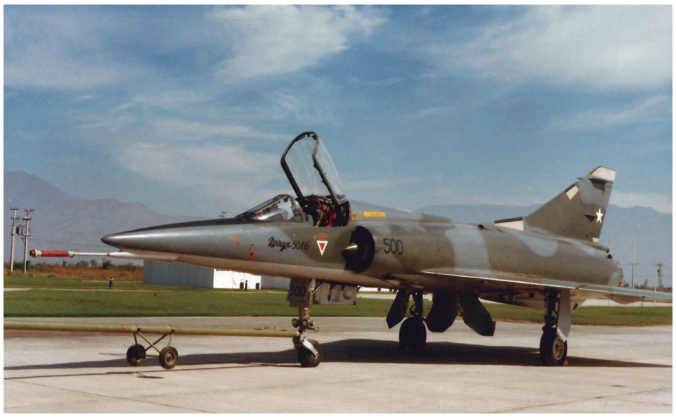
Mirage 50FC, No. 508, Aviation Group No. 4, Chilean Air Force, Chabunco Airbase, Punta Arenas, 1986.

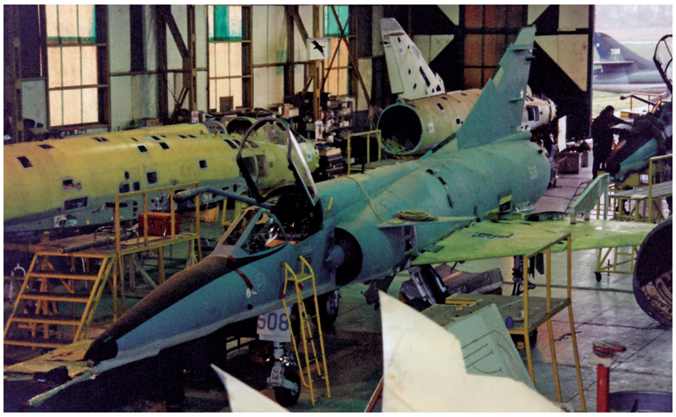


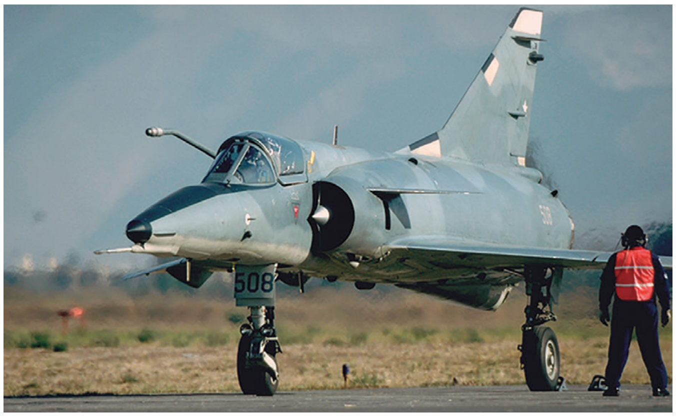
Mirage 50CN Pantera, No. 508, Aviation Group No. 4, Chilean Air Force, Chabunco Airbase, Punta Arenas, 1996.

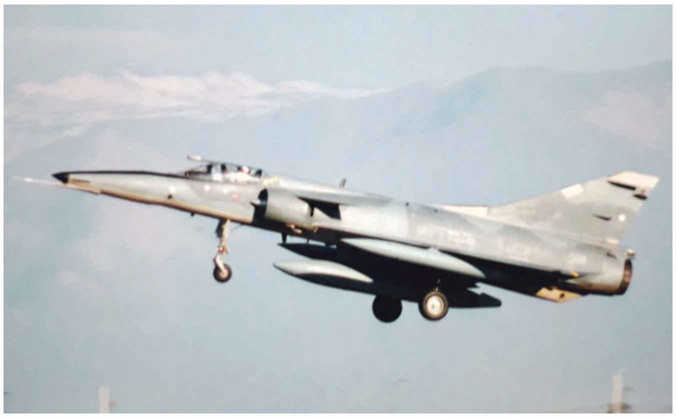


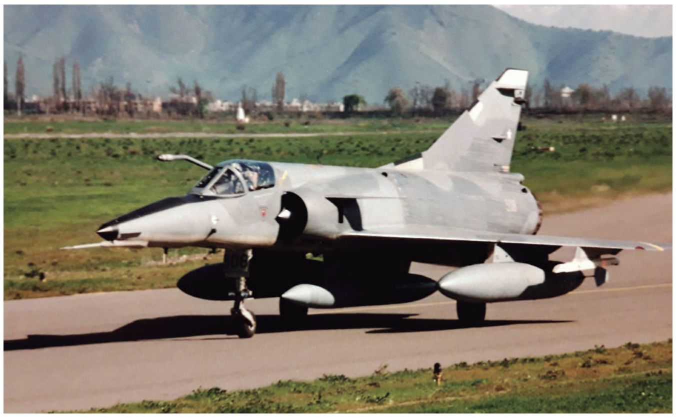

Mirage 5F No. 30, 13-PT from 2/13 Alpes Fighter Squadron in Toul, June 1978. (Christian Boisselon)

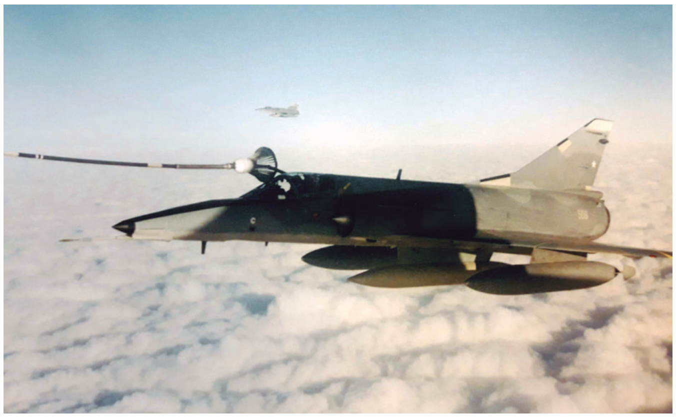

Mirage 50FC, No. 500, being towed on the Aviation Group No. 4 tarmac in Pudahuel Airbase, 1981. (Germán Lüer M.)

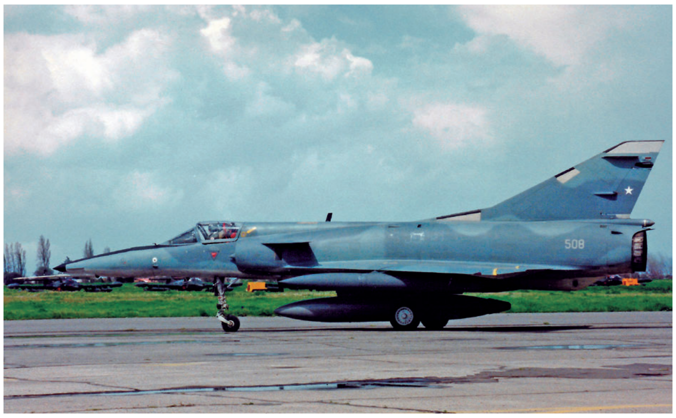

Mirage 50FC No. 508, being converted into Mirage 50CN Pantera in the ENAER facility. (Rino Poletti B. collection)


Mirage 50CN Pantera No. 508, is preparing for a flight demonstration at FIDAE 2000. (Alessandro Bocca P. collection)

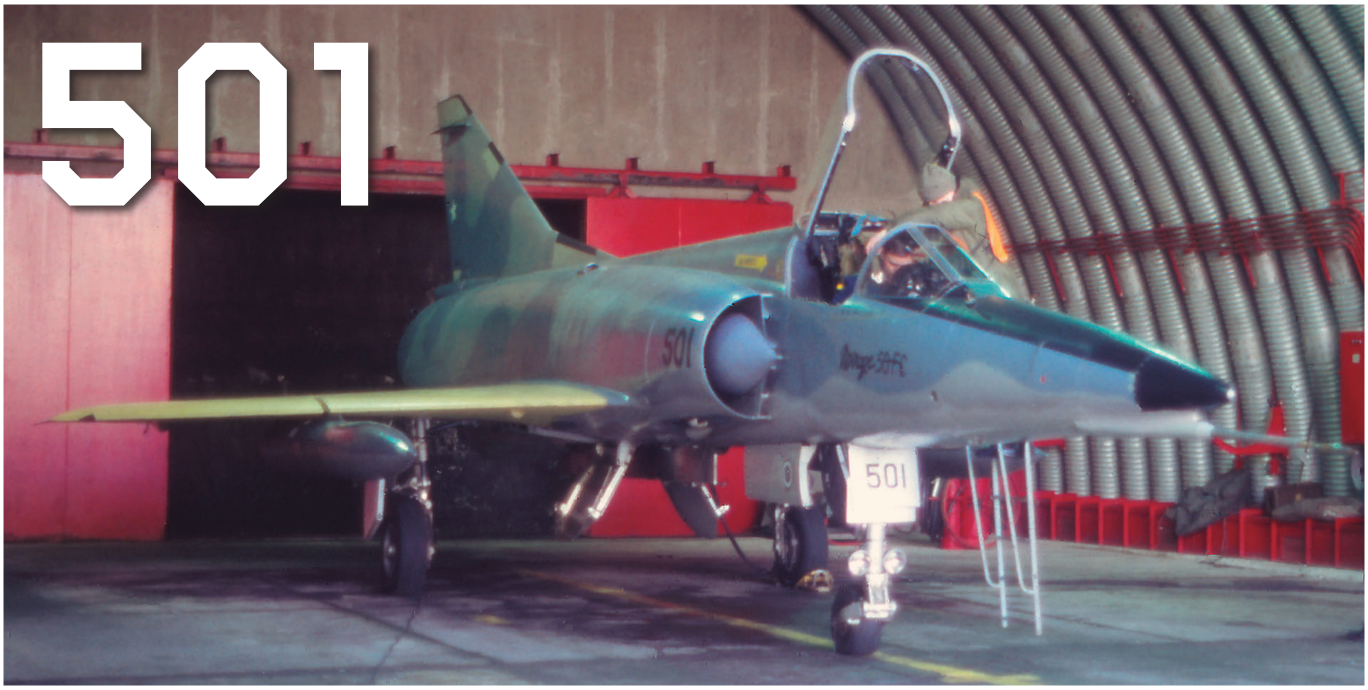

Mirage 50CN Pantera No. 508, landing, having participated in the Military Parade 2000 flyover. (Claudio Cáceres G.)


Mirage 50CN Pantera No. 508, participating in the Military Parade 2000 flyover, taxiing at Los Cerrillos Airbase. (Claudio Cáceres G.)


Mirage 50CN Pantera No. 508, being refueled in flight on its transfer to Exercise Cruzex 2002, in Brazil. (FACh)

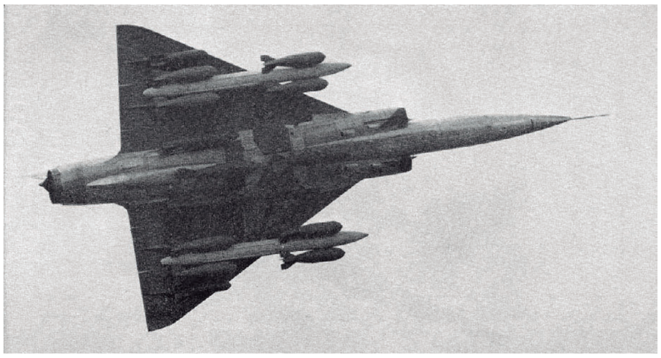

Mirage 50CN Pantera No. 508, taxiing at Los Cerrillos Air Base, sporting its first scheme. (Rino Poletti B. collection)

501



Mirage 5J

This was the first plane of the 5J series built for the Israeli Air Force, c/n 1. It made its first test flight on 19 May 1967 by Dassault test pilot Hervé Leprince-Ringuet. The same year, during June it was presented at Le Bourget, showing ground attack configurations of up to 14 bombs. During its presentation on Sunday, June 4, during the landing maneuver it burst one of its main gear tires, causing a fire in the fuselage due to the friction produced by the landing gear.



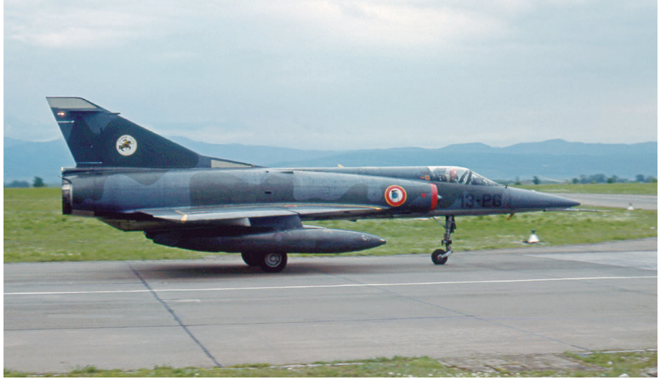
Mirage 5 No. 1, during one of its presentations at the 1967 at Le Bourget. (Aviation Week)

Mirage 5F

After the embargo imposed by President De Gaulle on Israel, this plane was stored in the EAA 601 Transfer Unit of the Châteaudun Air Base on July 8, 1970, until July 10, 1975. Then it was sent to the AIA 584 Aeronautics Industrial Workshop until July 28, 1975, to be converted to a 5F model, replacing its Atar 9C-5 engine with the 9C-7, as well as its starting engine. It also received the new camouflage paint scheme. Once modified and painted, it was sent again to the EAA 601 Transfer Unit for storage until November 23, 1977.

Service in the Armée de l'Air

Once removed from storage, this plane was incorporated into the French Air Force on November 23, 1977, to the 2/13 Alps fighter squadron, where it sported the 13-PG series. Between March 15 and May 11, 1978, it was sent to the Industrial Aeronautics Workshop AIA 584 to receive a maintenance inspection. Upon completion of the inspection, it returned to 2/13 fighter squadron, until May 29, 1979, when AMD/BA bought it, to be modified to the Mirage 50 standard and sold it to the Chilean Air Force. At the time of the retirement of the Armée de l'Air, this plane recorded 384:00 flight hours.



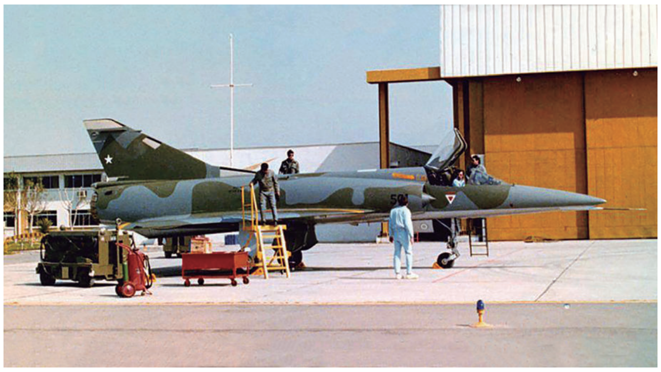
Mirage 5F No. 1, 13-PG from squadron 2/13 Alpes, photographed at Colmar Air Base in 1979. (Alexandre Gannier)

Mirage 50FC

Mirage 5F No. 1 was modified to standard 50, receiving its new Atar 9K-50 engine and communications and navigation equipment required by the Chilean Air Force. The paint scheme used by the Armée de l'Air was preserved, as well as the stencils in French. The white star was painted to both sides of the rudder and received the 501-serial number.

Service in the Chilean Air Force

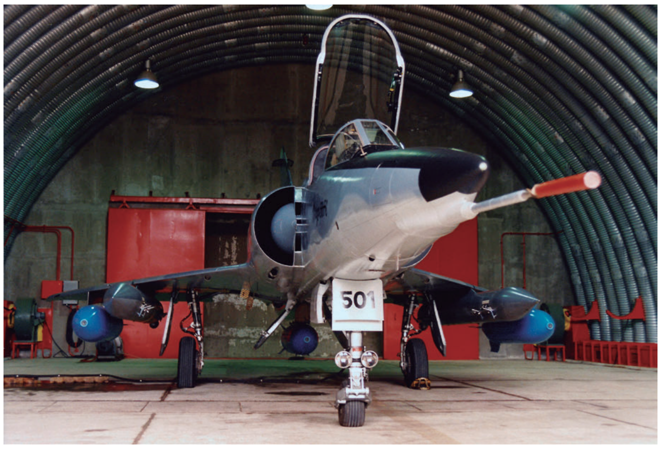
The Mirage 50FC No. 501 was delivered on June 26, 1980, and was registered in the Aviation Group No. 4, along with the other seven planes bought. It was transported disassembled by air from France and assembled in Chile by specialists from the Chilean Air Force, with the advice of Dassault technicians. It became one of the first supersonic delta plane to cross the Chilean airspace and made the first official flight on September 15, 1980, during the Reception Ceremony, under the control of Captain Osvaldo Sarabia Vilches.



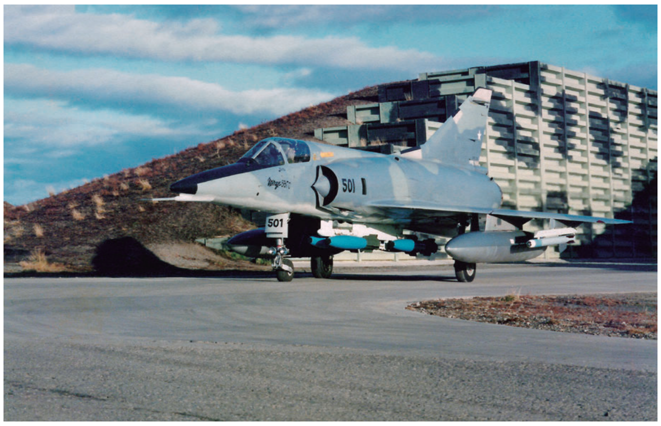
Mirage 50FC No. 501, during the preparation of the first flights at the Pudahuel Air Base, circa 1980. (Chilean Air Force)

Mirage 50FC No. 501 operated in the home of Aviation Group No. 4 at the Pudahuel Air Base, doing several deployments to different airbases of Chile from 1981 to operate with other combat planes and gained experience in the role assigned to the fleet.

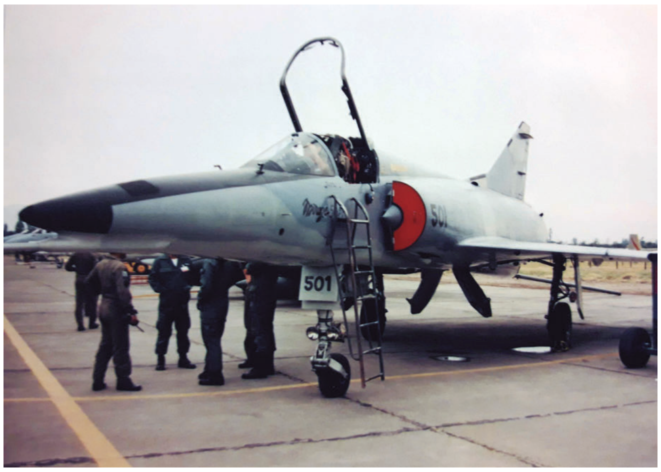
In 1986 it was transferred to the new place of settlement of Aviation Group No. 4, at the Chabunco Air Base, Punta Arenas. Shortly after operating in the Austral zone, it received an air superiority paint scheme, similar from Mirage 50C/DC planes, arrived in 1983. The pattern of the paint scheme was similar; however, the numerals did not follow the French standard, painted with thicker lines.



Mirage 50FC No. 501, with its new paint scheme, parked in one of the shelters built for the operation of Aviation Group No. 4 at Chabunco Air Base. (Poletti Archive collection)



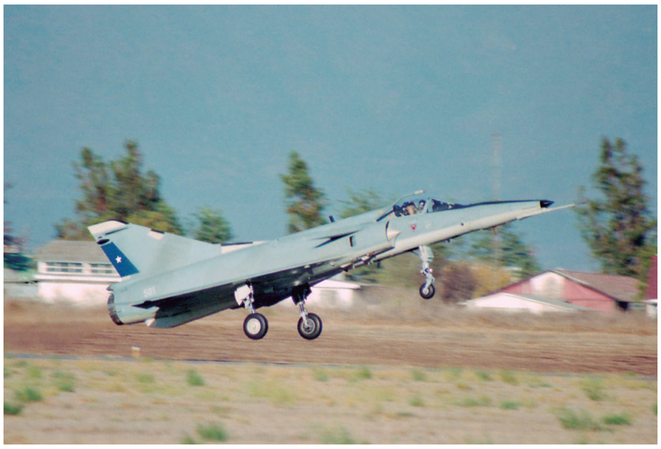
Another photograph of the Mirage 50FC No. 501 operating at its new airbase in Punta Arenas. It carried four snake-eye practice bombs and a Shafrir practice missile. (Rino Poletti collection)



Mirage 50FC No. 501 on static display during the FIDAE 1990, at El Bosque Air Base. (Claudio Cáceres)

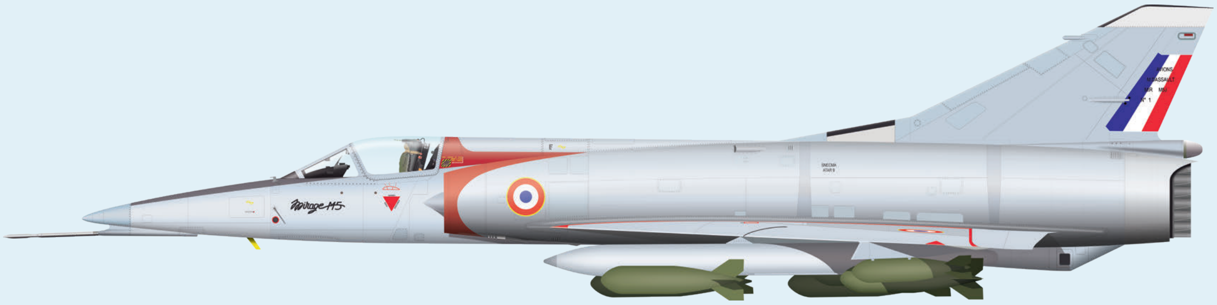
Pantera

This was the last Mirage 50FC aircraft converted to the Pantera standard, being delivered in 2001, which ended the project to upgrade the Mirage 50 fleet. In October 2004 it participated in the Salitre Exercise 2004. It continued to fly in the Aviation Group No. 4 until the end of its operational life in 2007. It is currently preserved in the gardens of the Chabunco Air Base, Punta Arenas.

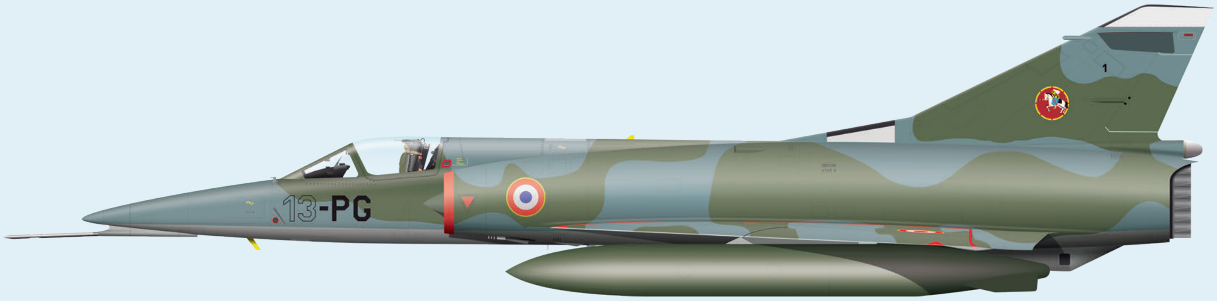


Mirage Pantera No. 501 taking off for a flight demonstration at FIDAE 2004 at Los Cerrillos Air Base. This was the last Mirage 50FC to be converted to the Pantera Standard. (Alvaro Romero)

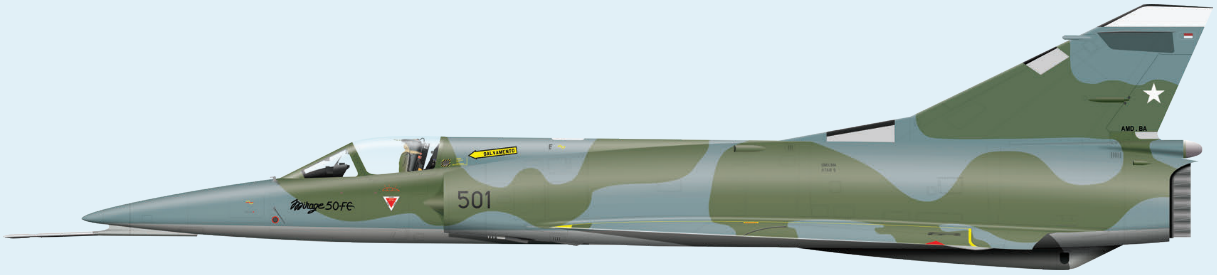
Mirage M5, No. 1, AMD/BA, Le Bourget, June 1967.



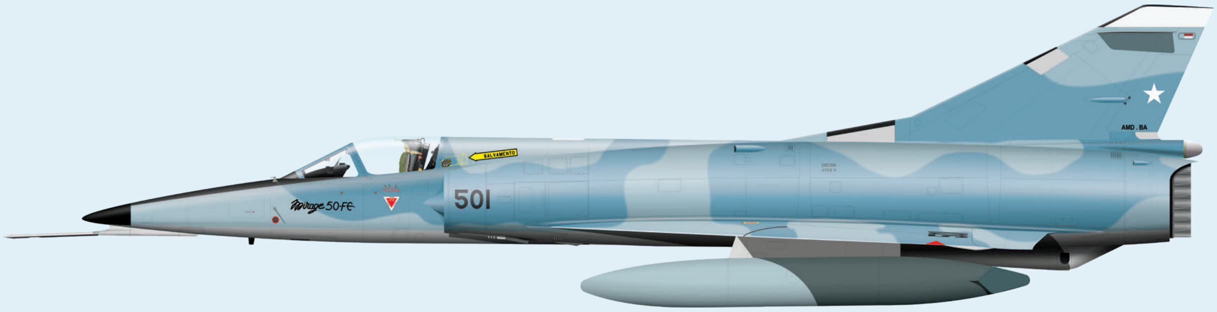
Mirage 5F, No. 1, 13-PG, 2/13 Alpes Fighter Squadron, Armée de l'Air, Base Colmar airbase, 1979.



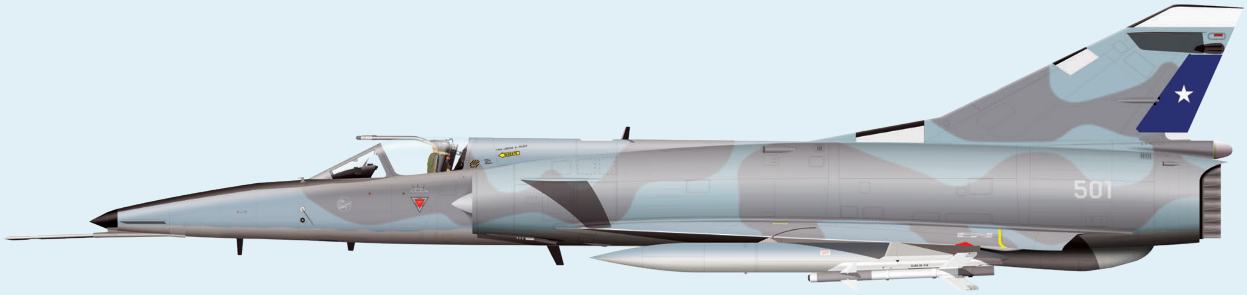
Mirage 50FC, No. 1, No. FACh 501, Aviation Group No. 4, Chilean Air Force, Pudahuel airbase, Santiago, 1980.

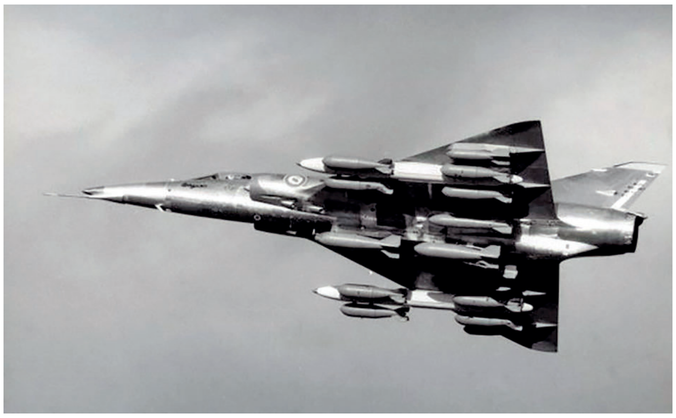

Mirage 50FC
501
SALVAMENTO
AMD-BA

Mirage 50FC, No. 1, No. FACh 501, Aviation Group No. 4, Chilean Air Force, Chabunco airbase, Punta Arenas, 1987.

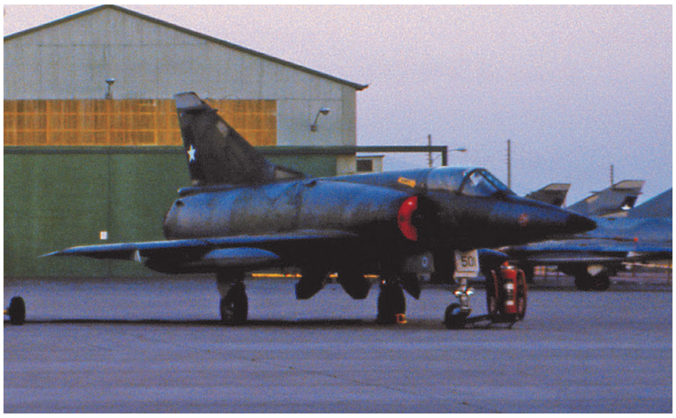

Mirage 50FC
501
SALVAMENTO
AMD-BA

Mirage 50CN Pantera, No. 1, No. FACh 501, Aviation Group No. 4, Chilean Air Force, Chabunco airbase, Punta Arenas, 2006.

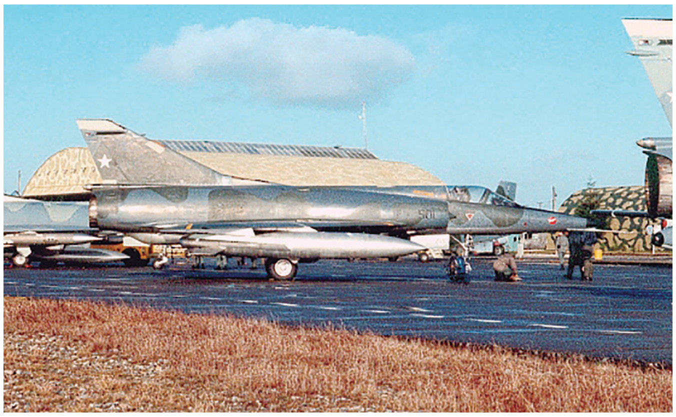




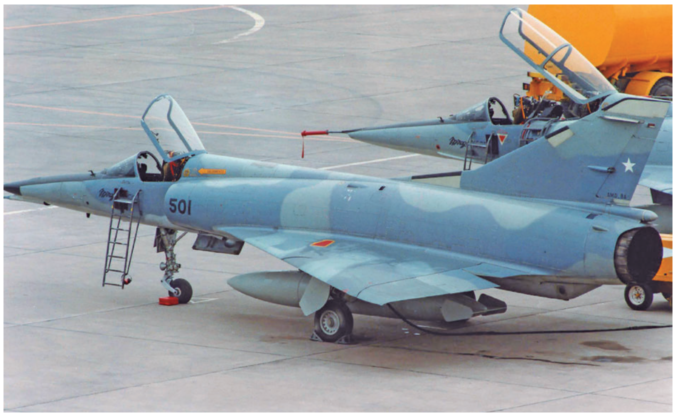
Mirage 5 No. 1, demonstrating full external loads at Le Bourget, June 1967. (Dassault)



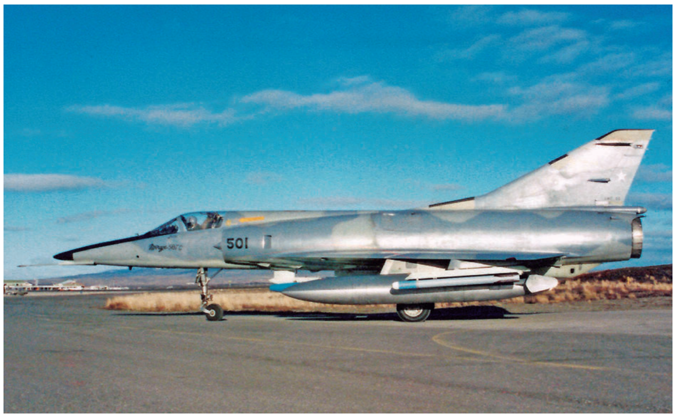
Mirage 50FC No. 501, from Group No. 4, sporting a variation of the original painting scheme, with the Group's emblem. (Via Javier Muñoz)



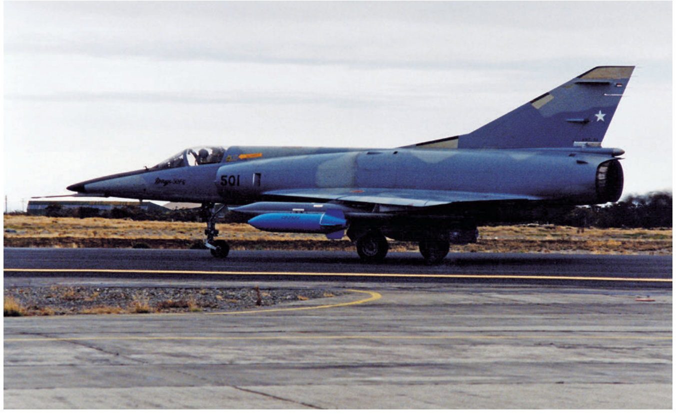
Mirage 50FC No. 501, sporting a variation of the original painting scheme, with the Group's emblem at El Tepual airbase, 1986. (Via Dan Toro)



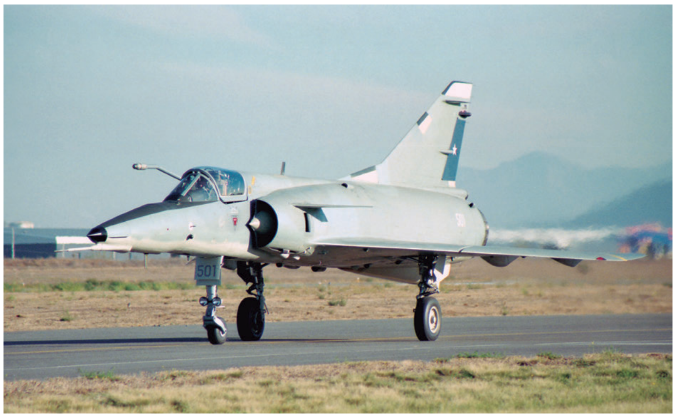
Mirage 50FC No. 501, from Group No. 4, sporting the air superiority painting scheme. (Claudio Cáceres)



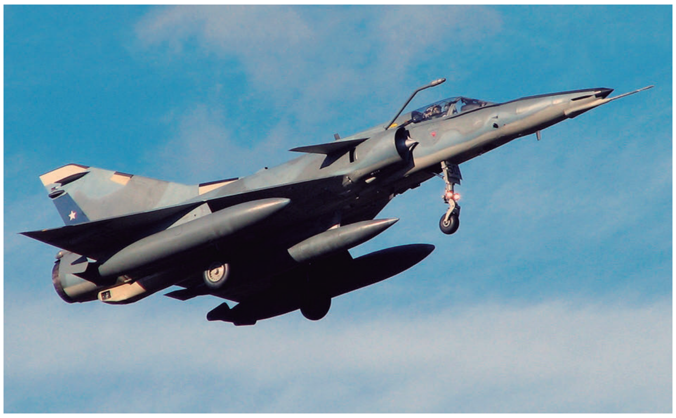
Mirage 50FC No. 501, from Group No. 4, carrying Shafrir II practice missiles at Chabunco Air Base, 1987. (Rino Poletti collection)



Mirage 50FC No. 501 carrying Cardoen cluster bombs during an exercise in Punta Arenas airbase in 1987. (Rino Poletti collection)



Mirage 50CN Pantera No. 501, taxiing during one of its flight demonstrations at FIDAE 2004. (Alvaro Romero)



Mirage 50CN Pantera No. 501, during its last parade in September 2007. (Luis Quintana)

502

Mirage 5J

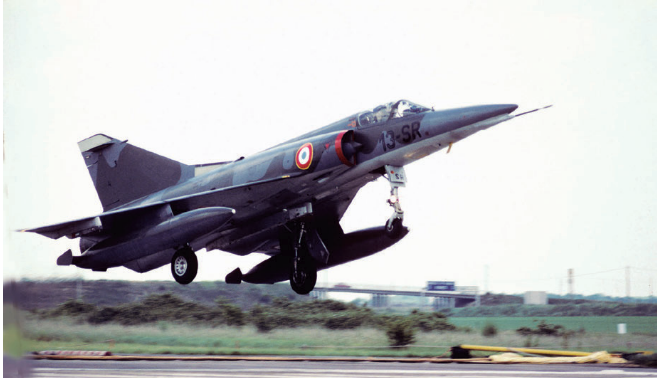
This model 5J plane was built for the Israeli Air Force, with the c/n 3. It made its first test flight on 12 October 1967 by Dassault test pilot Elie Buge. As a result of the arms embargo imposed by France on Israel, few days before the 6-Day War, this plane was detained, being stored on September 26, 1973.

Mirage 5F

On September 26, 1973, this plane is stored in the EAA 601 Transfer Unit of the Châteaudun Air Base. On November 18, 1975, it was sent to the Industrial Aeronautics Workshop AIA 584 until December 2, 1975, to be converted to model 5F, replacing its Atar 9C-5 engine with the 9C-7, as well as its starting engine (Compressed air to electric). It also receives the new camouflage scheme. Once modified and painted, it is sent to the EAA 601 Transfer Unit again for storage until February 21, 1978. It is then sent back to the AIA 584 Aeronautics Industrial Workshop for a maintenance inspection.

Service at the Armée de l'Air

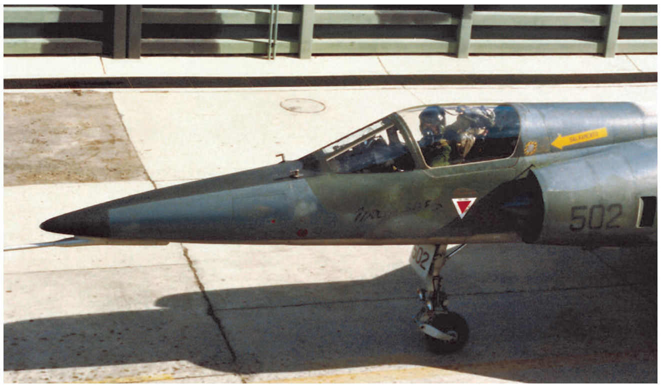
Once the inspection was conducted, this plane was incorporated into the French Air Force on April 24, 1978, to the 3/13 Auvergne Fighter Squadron, where it sported the 13-SR serial until May 14, 1979, when it was stored in the EAA 601 Transfer Unit until May 22, 1979. It is bought by AMD/BA, to be modified to the Mirage 50 standard and sold to the Chilean Air Force. At the time of the retirement of the Armée de l'Air, this plane recorded 332:00 flight hours.



Mirage 5F No. 3, landing in Tours Airbase on June 20, 1978, with 13-SR serial from EC 3/13 Auvergne. (Eric Moreau)

Mirage 50FC

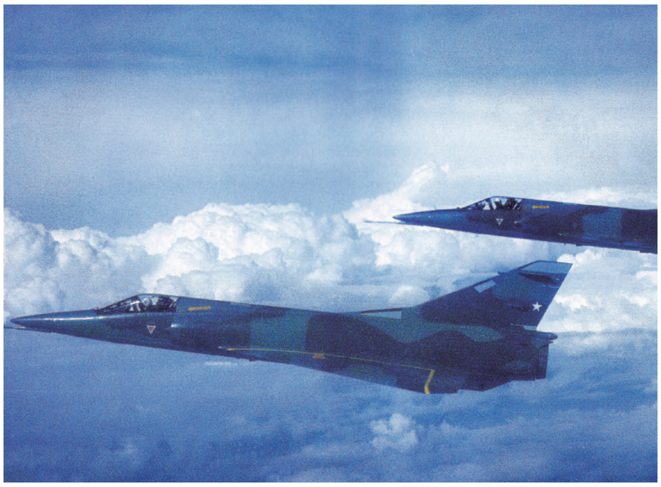
Mirage 5F No. 3 is modified to standard 50, receiving its new Atar 9K-50 engine and communications and navigation equipment required by the Chilean Air Force. The paint scheme used by the Armée de l'Air is kept, as well as the stencils written in French. The white star is painted to the rudder and receives the 502 series.



Mirage 50FC No. 502, operating at Chabunco Air Base, circa 1986, sporting a modified paint scheme from the original. (Rino Poletti collection)

Service in the Chilean Air Force

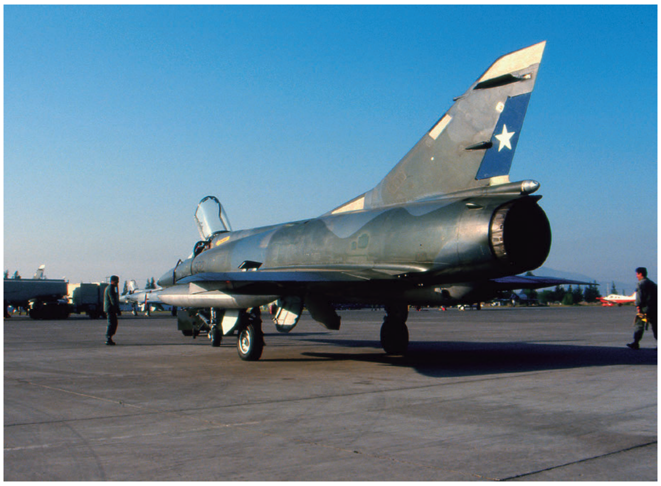
Mirage 50FC No. 502 was delivered on June 26, 1980, and was commissioned in Aviation Group No. 4, along with the other seven planes acquired. It was transported disassembled by air from France and assembled in Chile by specialists from the Chilean Air Force, with the advice of Dassault technicians.



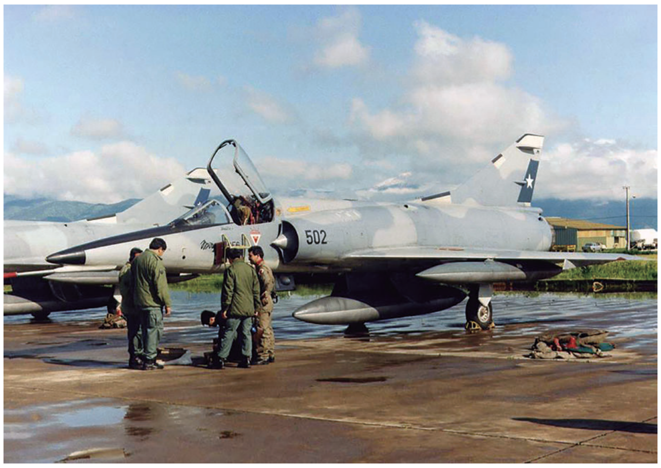
Mirage 50FC No. 502, photographed during the first flights at the Pudahuel Air Base, circa 1980. (Chilean Air Force)

Mirage 50FC No. 502 operated in the home of Aviation Group No. 4 at Pudahuel Air Base, doing several deployments from 1981 to different airbases of Chile to operate with other combat aircraft and gained experience in the role assigned to the new weapon system.

In 1986 it was transferred to the new place of settlement of Aviation Group No. 4, at Chabunco Air Base, Punta Arenas. Shortly after operating in the Austral zone, it received an air superiority painting scheme, similar from Mirage 50C/DC planes, arrived in 1983. The pattern of the scheme was similar; however, the numerals did not follow the French standard, applying thicker lines, more similar to the numerals from the USAF.



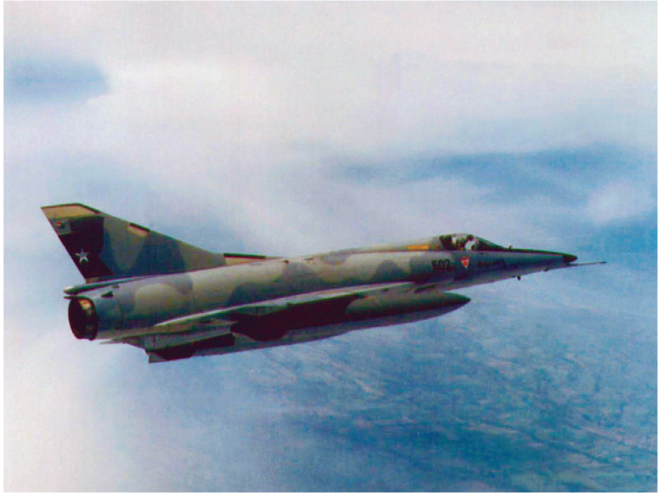
Mirage 50FC No. 502 being towed at Pudahuel Air Base in February 1986. (Via Javier Muñoz)



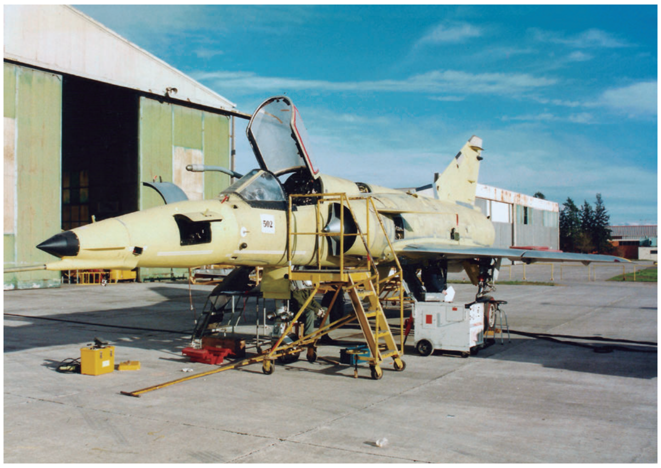
Mirage 50FC No. 502 sporting its new paint scheme at Chabunco Air Base. (Via Javier Muñoz)

Pantera

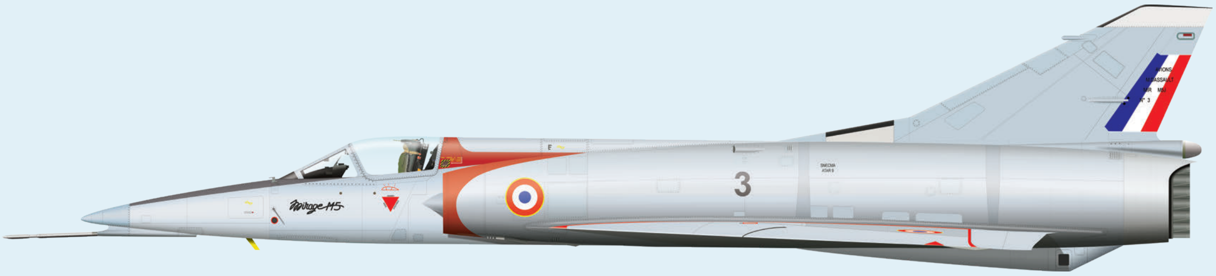
Mirage 50FC No. 502 was converted to the Panther standard in the mid-1990s. It continued to fly in Aviation Group No. 4, until 2003, when it was withdrawn from service. Currently this aircraft is preserved in the gardens of the Chabunco Air Base, Punta Arenas.



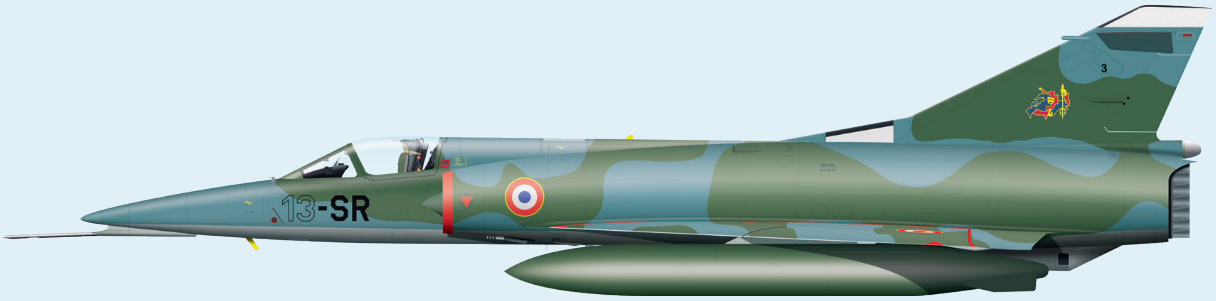
Mirage 50FC No. 502 in flight sporting its air superiority painting scheme. (Via Dan Toro)



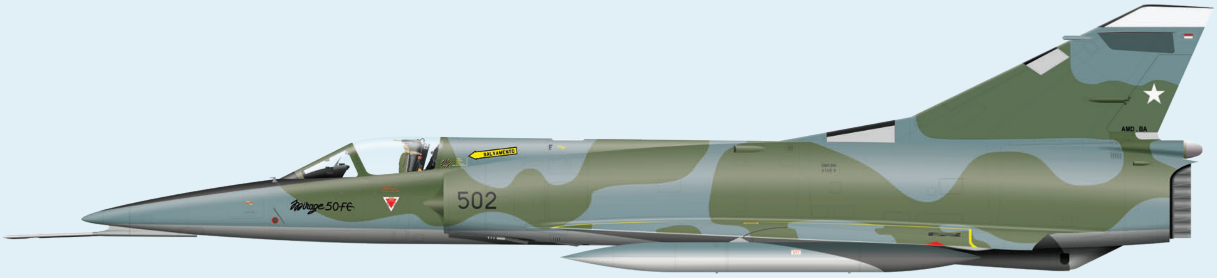
Mirage 50FC No. 502 in an advanced state of transformation to Pantera standard at ENAER, July 1997. (Rino Poletti collection)



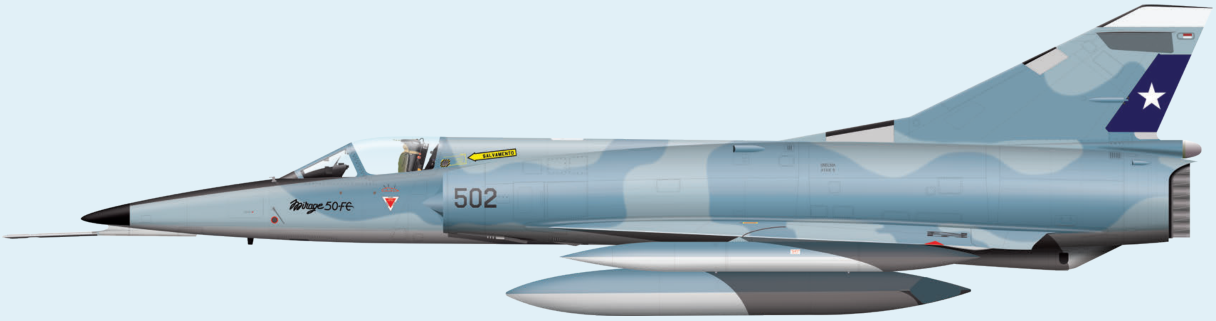
Mirage 5J, No. 3, Israel Air Force, September de 1973.



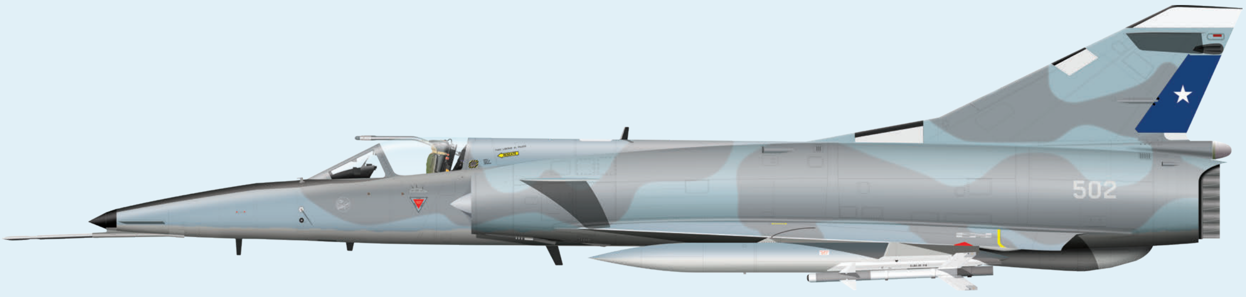
Mirage 5F, No. 3, 13-SR, 3/13 Auvergne Fighter Squadron, Tours, June 1978.


SALVAMENTO
Mirage 50FC
502

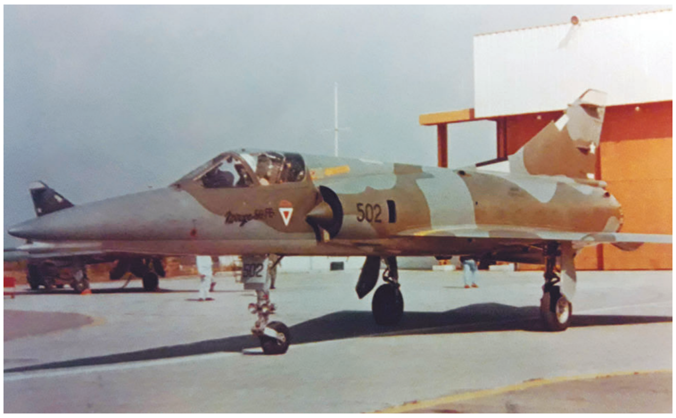
Mirage 50FC, No. 3, No. FACh 502, Aviation Group No. 4, Chilean Air Force, Pudahuel airbase, Santiago, 1980.


SALVAMENTO
Mirage 50FC
502

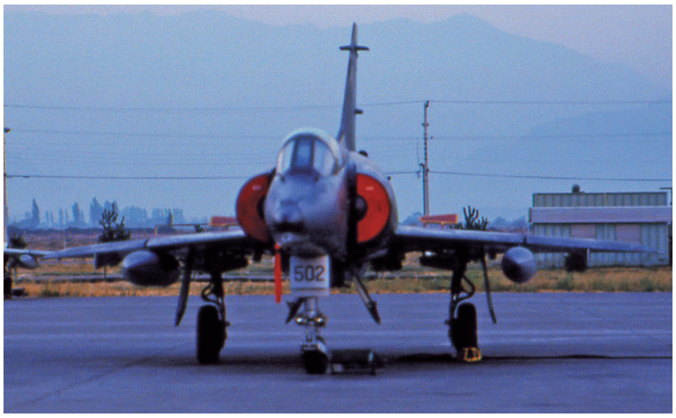
Mirage 50FC, No. 3, No. FACh 502, Aviation Group No. 4, Chilean Air Force, Chabunco airbase, Punta Arenas, 1988.



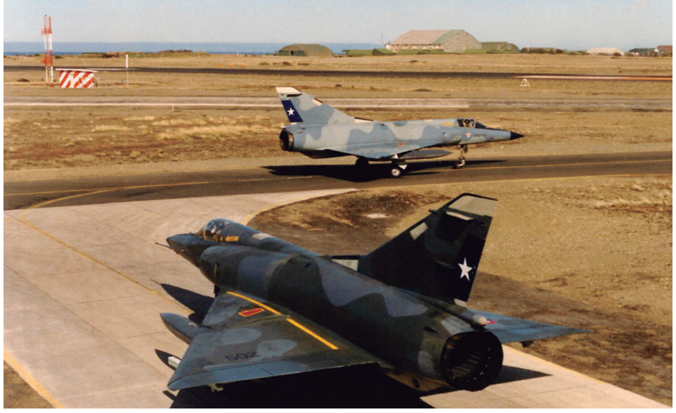
Mirage 50CN Pantera No. 3, No. FACh 502, Aviation Group No. 4, Chilean Air Force, Chabunco airbase, Punta Arenas, 2006.



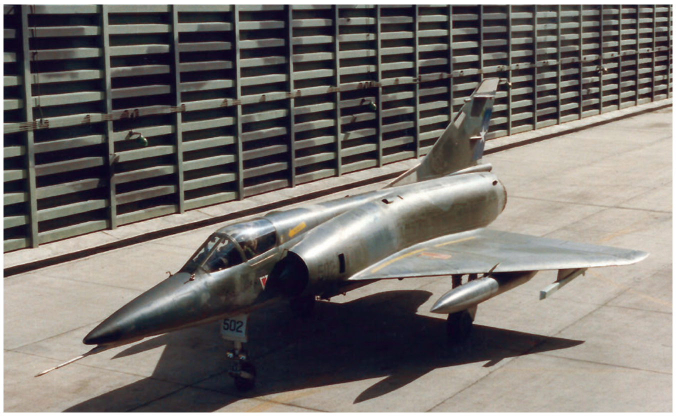
First flights of Mirage 50FC No. 502 at the facilities of Group No. 4, note it does not use anti-glare paint on the nose and the angle of the variant's stencil. (Chilean Air Force)



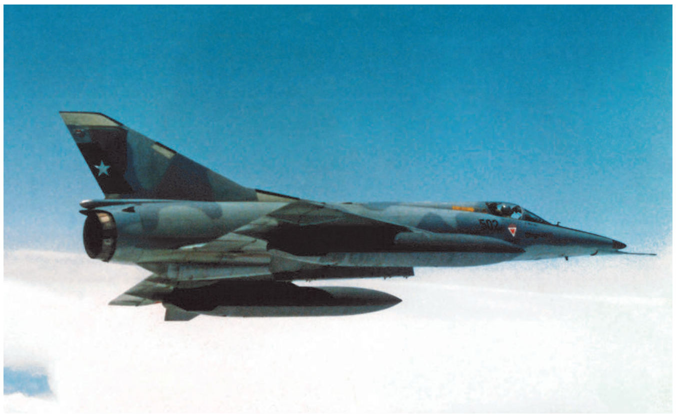
Mirage 50FC No. 502 with its second painting scheme, parked on the tarmac of Group No. 4, February 1986. (Via Javier Muñoz)



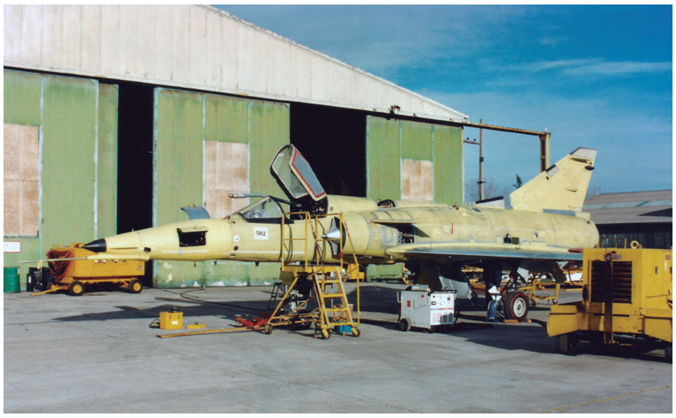
Mirage 50FC No. 502, from Aviation Group No. 4, operating at Chabunco Air Base. (Rino Poletti collection)



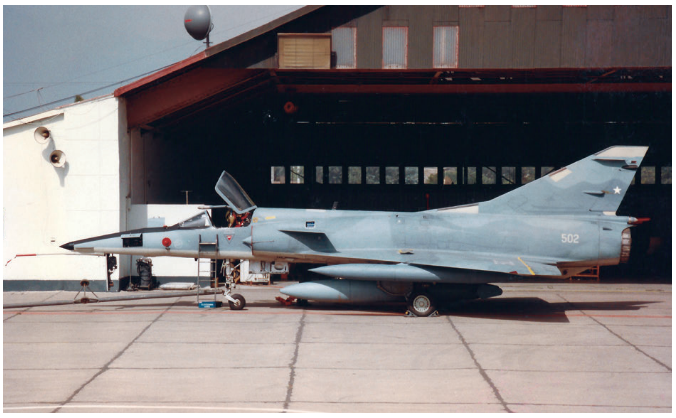
Mirage 50FC No. 502, from Aviation Group No. 4, operating in the facilities enabled at the Chabunco Air Base. (Rino Poletti collection)



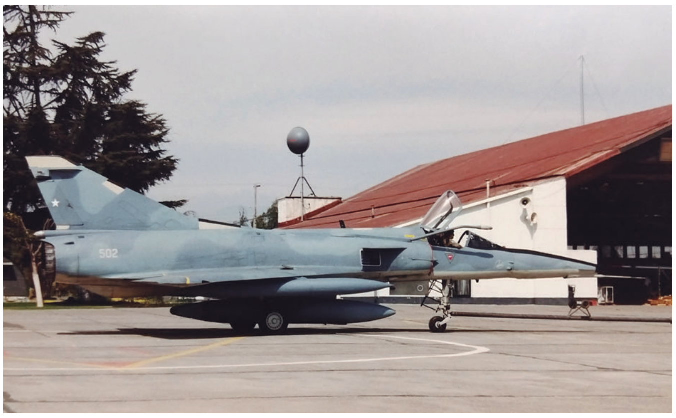
Mirage 50FC No. 502, from Aviation Group No. 4, sporting its air superiority painting scheme. (Rino Poletti collection)



Mirage 50FC No. 502, during the process of modernization to the Pantera standard in the workshops of ENAER, circa 1997. (Rino Poletti collection)

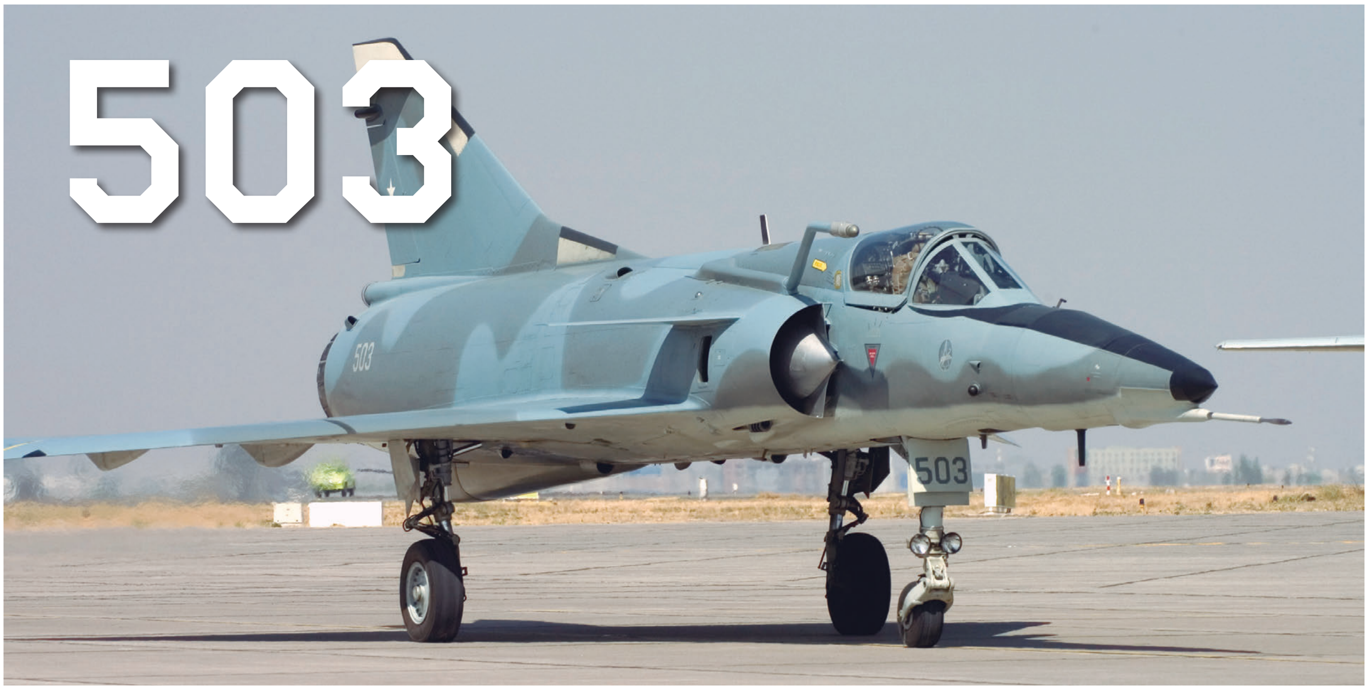


Mirage 50CN Pantera No. 502, sporting the air superiority painting scheme at Los Cerrillos Air Base. (Rino Poletti collection)



Right view from Panther No. 502, corresponding to the photograph at left. (Claudio Cáceres)

503



Mirage 5J

This 5J series aircraft built for the Israeli Air Force, received the c/n 5. It made its first test flight on 13 November 1967 by Dassault test pilot Marcel Tixador.

Mirage 5F

After the embargo imposed by President De Gaulle on Israel, this aircraft passed to the Armée de l'Air on July 27, 1973, and it was stored in the EAA 601 Transfer Unit of the Châteaudun Air Base until April 29, 1975. Then, it was sent for a couple of weeks, until May 16, 1975, to the AIA 584 Industrial Aeronautics Workshop to be converted to a 5F model, replacing its Atar 9C-5 engine with the 9C-7, as well as its starting engine. It also receives the new camouflage scheme. Once modified and painted, it was again sent to the EAA 601 Transfer Unit for storage until April 13, 1978. He was subsequently sent back to the AIA 584 Aeronautics Industrial Workshop for a maintenance inspection, until June 12, 1978. Once the inspection is completed, it is stored in the EAA 601 Transfer Unit again, until November 6, 1978.

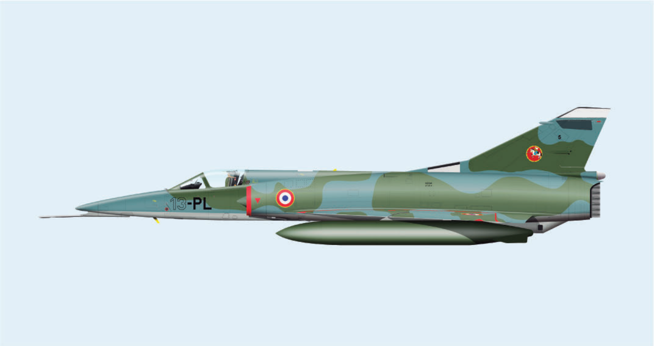


Illustration of the Mirage 5F No. 5 in the Armée de l'Air, due to the fact that there are no photographic records of this aircraft. (Julio Arróspide)

Service in the Armée de l'Air

Once removed from storage, this plane was incorporated into the French Air Force on November 23, 1978, to the 2/13 Alps Fighter Squadron, where it sported the 13-PL series. On May 28, 1979, AMD/BA bought it, to be modified to the Mirage 50 standard and sold to the Chilean Air Force. At the time of the retirement of the Armée de l'Air, this aircraft recorded 153:00 flight hours.

Mirage 50FC

Mirage 5F No. 5 was modified to standard 50, receiving its new Atar 9K-50 engine and communications and navigation equipment required by the Chilean Air Force. The painting scheme used by the Armée de l'Air was kept, as well as the stencils written in French. The white star was painted to the rudder and received the 503 series.

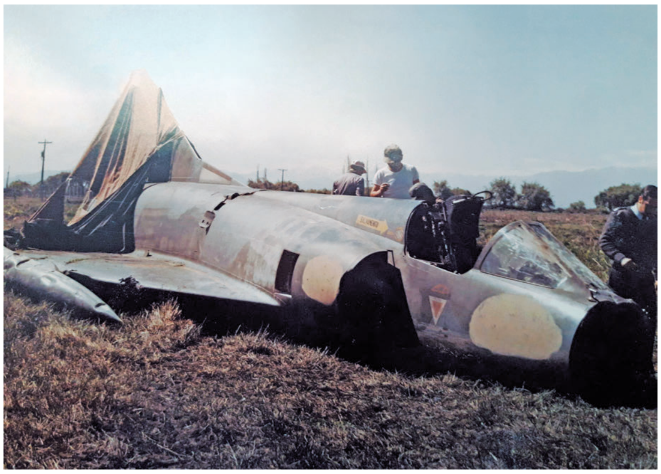
Service in the Chilean Air Force

The refurbished Mirage, with 50FC variant and No. 503 series was delivered on June 26, 1980, and is registered in the Aviation Group No. 4, along with the other seven planes acquired, which are transferred via Air France Cargo. It was transported disassembled from France and reassembled in Chile by specialists from the Chilean Air Force, with the advice of Dassault technicians.

Mirage 50FC No. 503 operated mainly in the home of Aviation Group No. 4 at the Pudahuel Air Base, doing deployments from 1981 to different parts of Chile to operate with other fighter planes and gained experience in the role assigned to the fleet.

Mirage 50FC No. 503, photographed at Cerro Moreno Air Base, circa 1983. From left, Captain John Orr (RIP) from South African Air Force, Captain Sergio Molina C. from Aviation Group No. 7, and Captain Frans Vermaak from South African Air Force. The South African officers were in an interchange course in F-5E/F. (Via Sergio Molina)

On 20 September 1984, during a training flight, Squadron Commander Eitel Von Mühlenbrock Hevia, Mirage 503 suffered a flame-out during the landing approach. The pilot had no time to eject and crashed into swampy terrain. Providentially, the condition of the terrain saved the life of the pilot, not without suffering significant injuries to his spine. The plane was also extensively damaged but was scheduled for recovery at the newly created ENAER, former Maintenance Wing.



The state in which Mirage 50FC No. 503 was left on September 20, 1984. Note the paint on the aircraft's identification marks to avoid its recognition. (Rino Poletti collection)

Commander Von Mühlenbrock underwent several operations on his spine, being prevented from flying fighter jets. Meanwhile, Mirage 503 was subjected to a recovery program, for which it was put in jacks in one of the hangars of ENAER. However, on March 3, 1985, it suffered a new accident, this time collapsing from its jacks, product of the 8.0 grade on the Richter scale earthquake suffered by the central zone of Chile. The plane suffered deformations in one of its air intakes, which delayed its recovery schedule.

Pantera

In the mid-1990s, Mirage 50FC No. 503 was the first 50FC planes to be modified to the Pantera standard, undoubtedly a risky decision due to the fact that it suffered a major accident. Thus, in September 1995 it made his first successful test flight at the El Bosque Air Base and after another four test flights conducted in Aviation Group No. 10 at Los Cerrillos airbase, it was transferred to Aviation Group No. 4 in Chabunco.

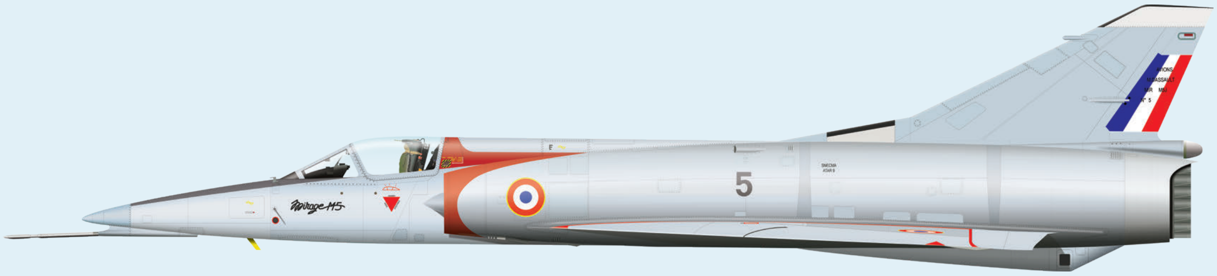
Coincidentally with the arrival of Mirage 503 to Punta Arenas, the now Brigadier General Von Mühlenbrock was in command of the 4th Air Brigade and he was allowed to perform a flight retraining in Mirage, making his first solo flight in the 503, closing a story that had begun several years ago in an accident that almost cost him his life in that same plane.

Mirage 503 continued to fly the Aviation Group No. 4 until the end of its operational life in 2007. Before being decommissioned, in 2006, it received a new painting scheme, which was characterized by having the pattern of stains with the colors inverted, which was kept until the end of its operation. In July 2008, this plane, along with No. 515, were donated to the National Aeronautical and Space Museum of Chile, where they were restored and are currently on display.

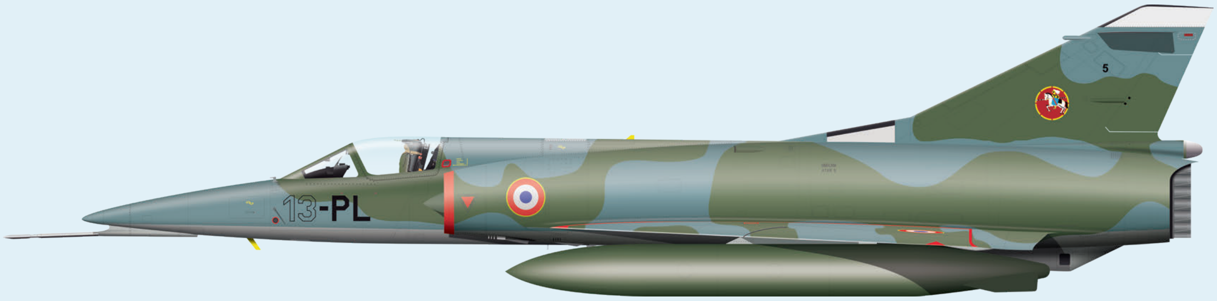
Mechanics perform the last checks before the first test flight of Mirage 503 in September 1995. (Mauricio Ithurbisquy)

Pantera No. 503 taking off during the first test flight in September 1995 at El Bosque Air Base. (Mauricio Ithurbisquy)

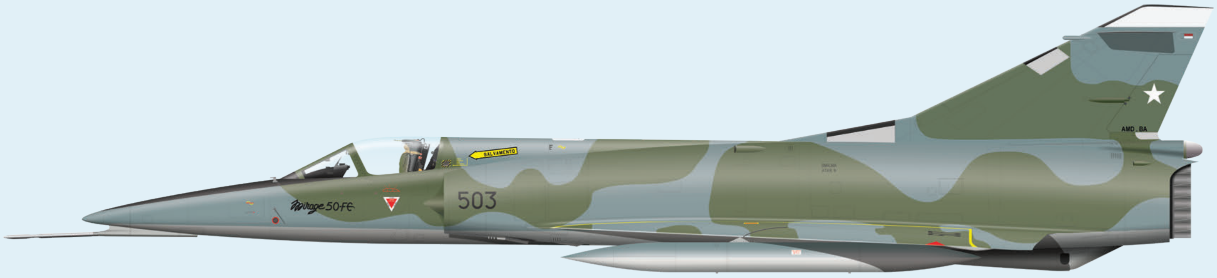
Mirage 5J, No. 5, Israeli Air Force, April 1975.



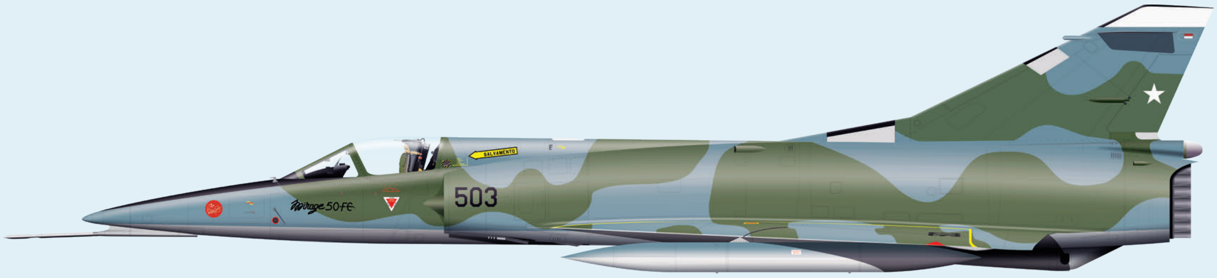
Mirage 5F, No. 5, 13-PL, 2/13 Alpes Fighter Squadron, Armée de l'Air, Colmar airbase, 1978.



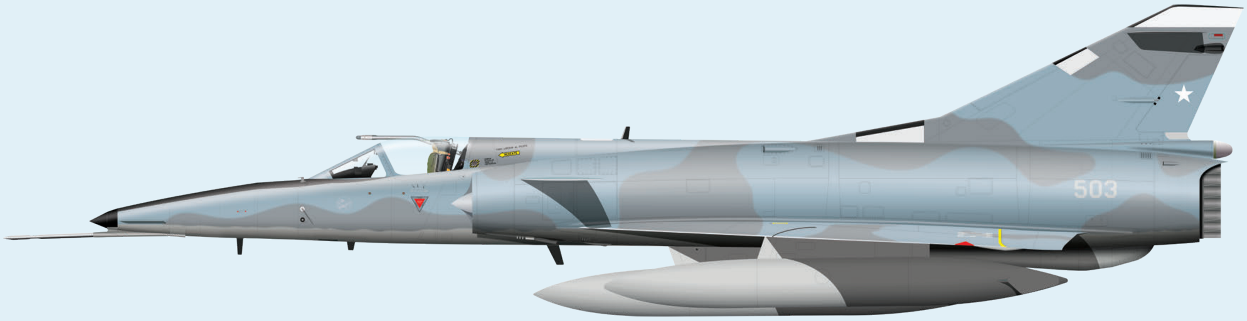
Mirage 50FC, No. 5, No. FACh 503, Aviation Group No. 4, Chilean Air Force, Pudahuel airbase, Santiago, 1981.

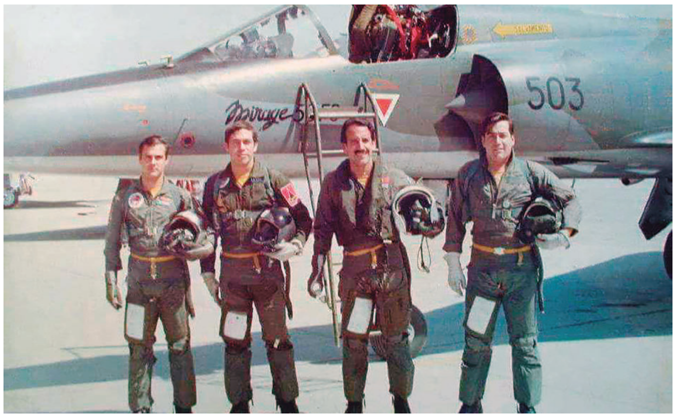

SALVAMENTO
Mirage 50FC
503

Mirage 50FC, No. 5, No. FACh 503, Aviation Group No. 4, Chilean Air Force, Cerro Moreno airbase, Antofagasta, 1983.

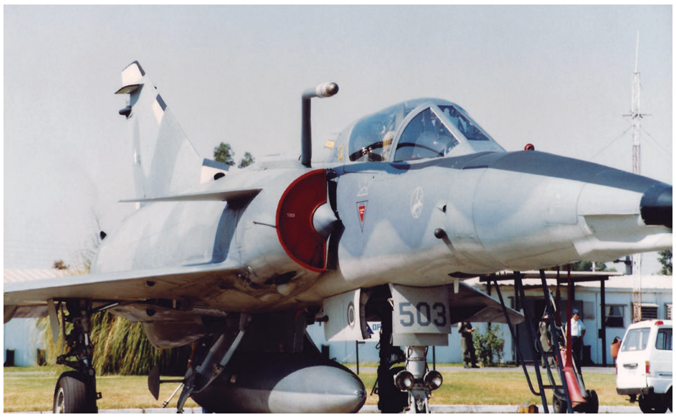

SALVAMENTO
Mirage 50FC
503

Mirage 50CN Pantera, No. 5, No. FACh 503, Aviation Group No. 4, Chilean Air Force, Chabunco airbase, Punta Arenas, 2007.

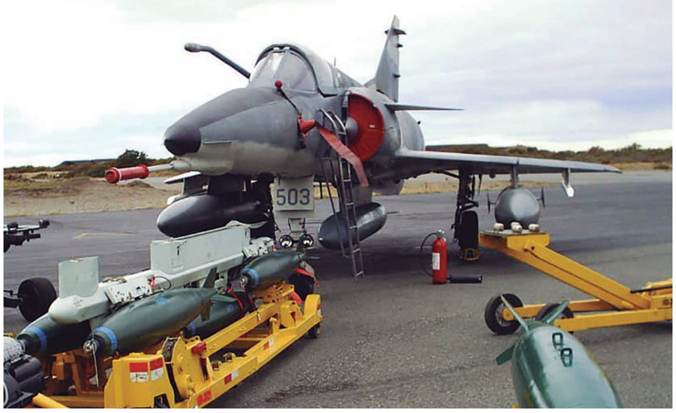




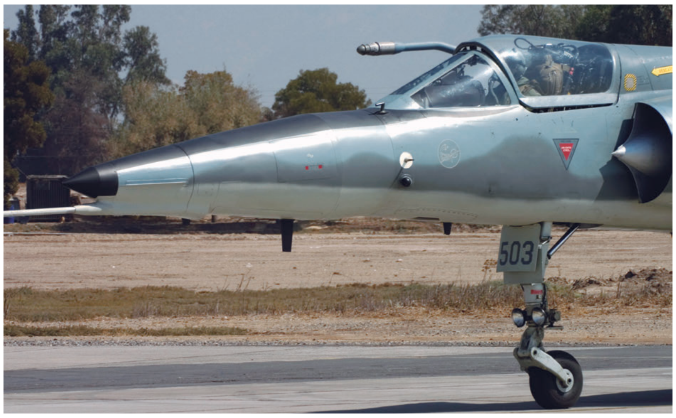
Pilots from Aviation Group No. 4, posing in front of Mirage 50FC No. 503. (Via Dan Toro)



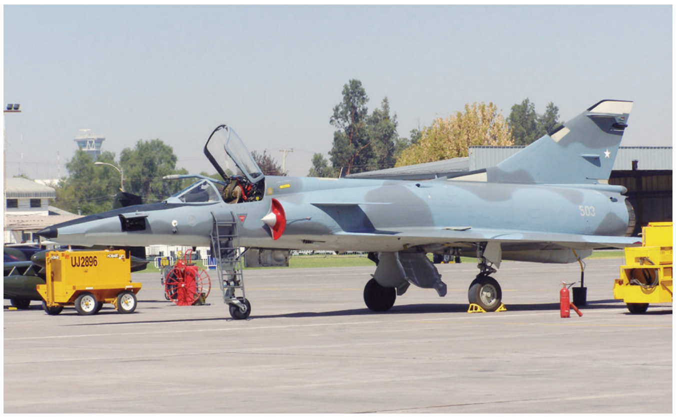
Mirage 50CN Pantera No. 503, parked on the tarmac of Aviation Group No. 10. (Rino Poletti collection)



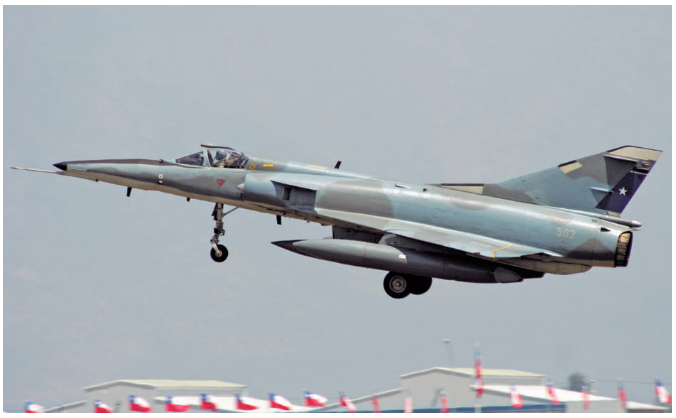
Mirage Pantera No. 503, from Aviation Group No. 4, during an open house event in 2005. (Jorge Tima)



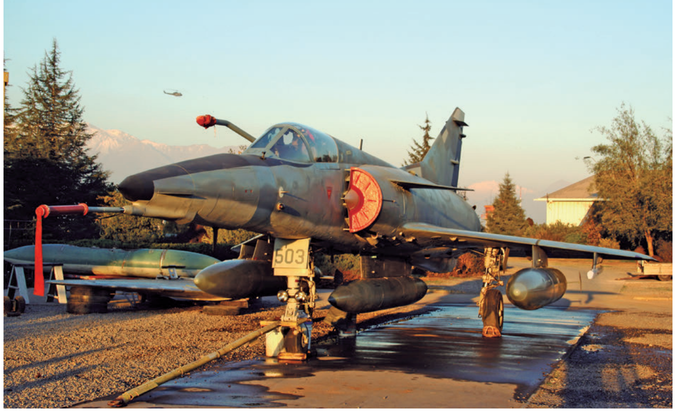
Mirage Pantera No. 503 with camouflage pattern with inverted colors, taxiing during one of its flight demonstrations at FIDAE 2006. (Alessandro Bocca collection)



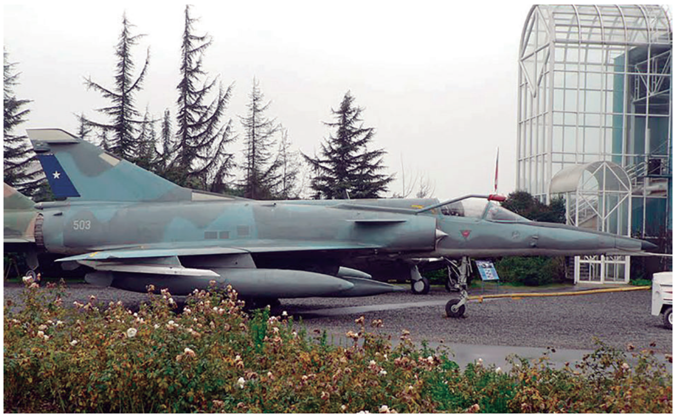
Mirage Pantera No. 503, on the flight line of FIDAE 2006. Note the difference in background color between the nose and fuselage. (Raúl Zamora)



Mirage Pantera No. 503, from Aviation Group No. 4, during the Change of Command of the Commander in Chief of the FACh, 2006. (Alvaro Romero)

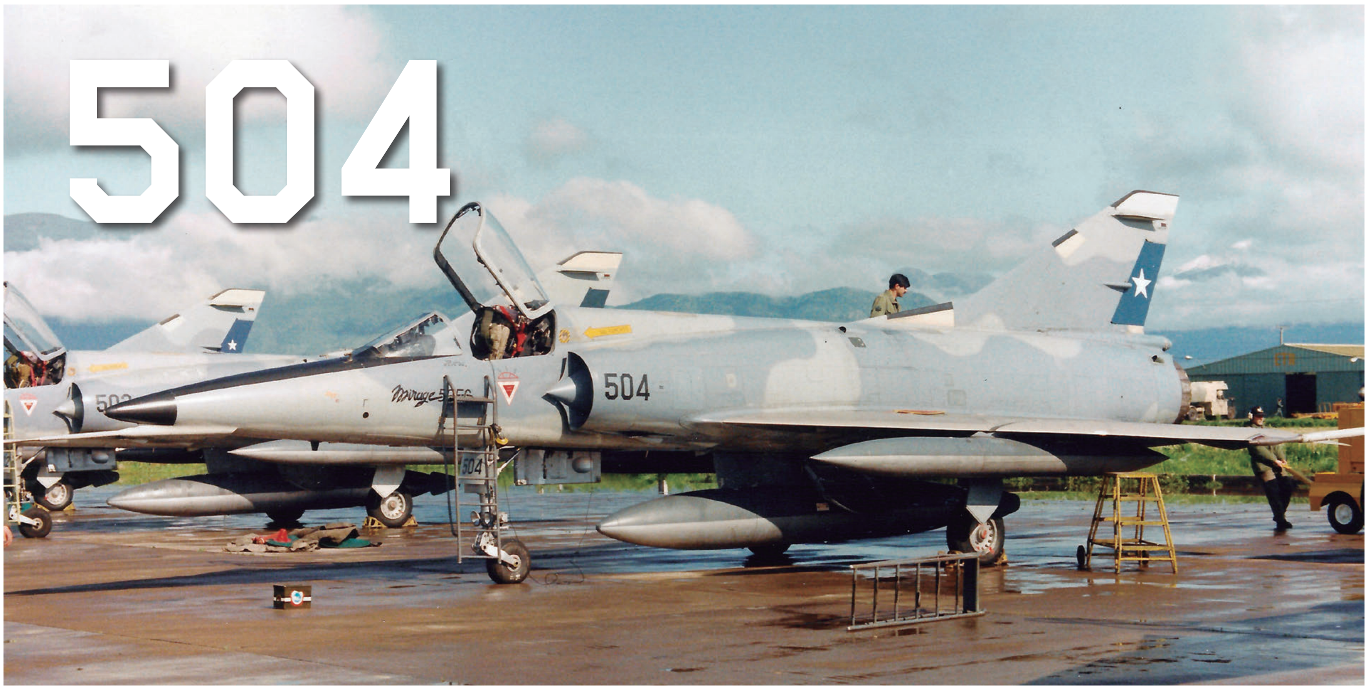


Mirage Pantera No. 503, recently arrived at the Aeronautical Museum, after being transferred by land and with more than one scratch. (Alvaro Romero)



Mirage Pantera No. 503, on static exhibition at the National Aeronautical and Space Museum. (Chilean Aeronautical Museum)

504



Mirage 5J

This 5J series aircraft built for the Israeli Air Force, received the No. 8. It made its first test flight on January 2, 1968, by Dassault test pilot Daniel Rastel.

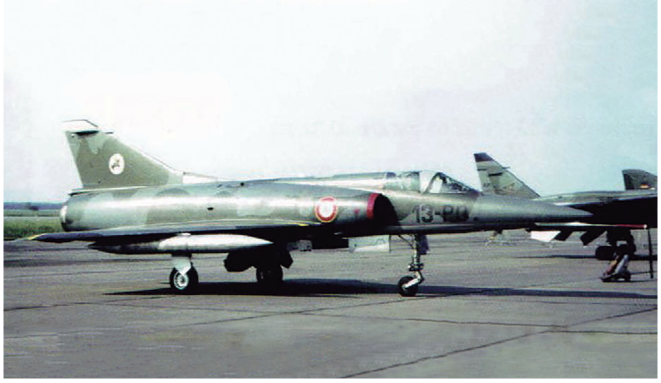
Mirage 5F

After the embargo imposed by President De Gaulle on Israel, this plane was stored in the EAA 601 Transfer Unit of the Châteaudun Air Base on July 8, 1970, until May 30, 1975.

Then it was sent for a couple of weeks, until June 17, 1975, to the AIA 584 Industrial Aeronautics Workshop to be converted to a 5F variant, replacing its Atar 9C-5 engine with the 9C-7, as well as its starting motor (Compressed air to electric). It also received the new camouflage painting scheme. Once modified and painted, it was sent to the EAA 601 Transfer Unit again, for storage until October 17, 1977.

Service in the Armée de l'Air

Once removed from storage, this aircraft was incorporated into the French Air Force on October 17, 1977, to the 2/13 Alps Fighter Squadron, where it sported the 13-PQ serial. Between November 3, 1977 and January 12, 1978, it was sent to the Aeronautics Industrial Workshop AIA 584 to receive a maintenance inspection. Once the inspection was finished, it returned to the 2/13 Fighter Squadron, using the same serial 13-PQ, until May 14, 1979. Then it was briefly stored until May 22, 1979, the date on which it is bought by AMD/BA, to be modified to the Mirage 50 standard and to be sold to the Chilean Air Force. At the time of retirement from the Armée de l'Air, this aircraft had logged 399:00 flight hours.



Mirage 5F No. 8 (13-PQ) of 2/13 Alpes fighter squadron, in Strabourg-Entzheim in June 1978. (Marcel Fluet)

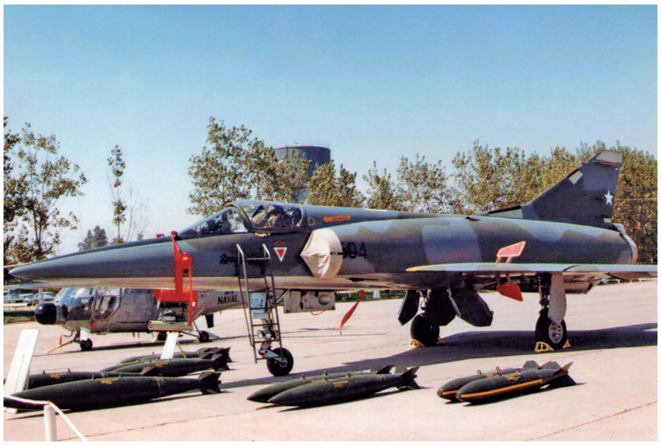
Mirage 50FC

Mirage 5F No. 8 was modified to standard 50, receiving its new Atar 9K-50 engine and communications and navigation equipment required by the Chilean Air Force. The paint scheme used by the Armée de l'Air was kept, as well as the stencils written in French. The white star is painted on the rudder and received the 504 serial.

Captain José Huepe P. begins a new training mission in the Mirage 50FC No. 504 at Chabunco Air Base, 1989. (Rino Poletti Collection)

Service in the Chilean Air Force

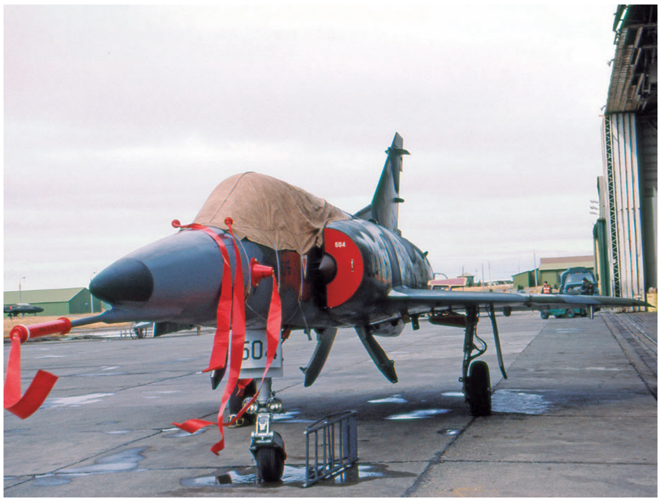
The Mirage 50FC No. 504 is delivered on June 26, 1980, and is registered in aviation Group No. 4, along with the other 7 planes bought. It is transported unarmed by air from France and assembled in Chile by specialists from the Chilean Air Force, with the advice of Dassault technicians.



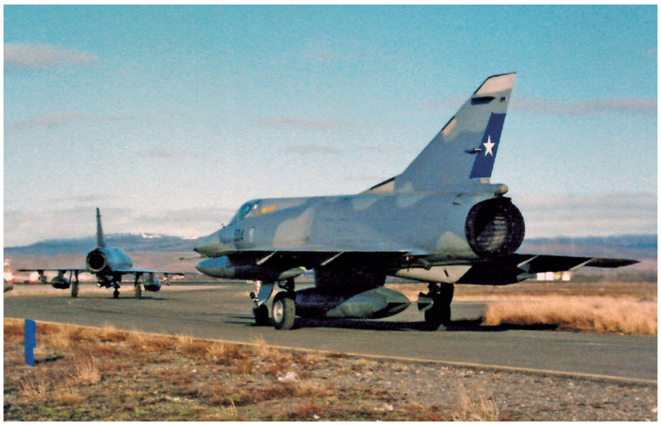
Mirage 50FC No. 504, with its first paint scheme displayed during one of the first FIDA. (Via Dan Toro)

Mirage 50FC No. 504 operated mainly in the home of Aviation Group No. 4 at the Pudahuel Air Base in Santiago, doing deployments to different airbases of Chile from 1981 to operate with other fighter planes and gain experience in the role assigned to the fleet.

In 1986 it was transferred to the new place of settlement of Aviation Group No. 4, at the Chabunco Air Base, Punta Arenas. After a while of operating in the Austral zone, it received the new air superiority painting scheme, similar to the Mirage 50C/DC planes, arrived in 1983. The pattern of the scheme and the colors were similar; however, the numerals did not follow the French standard, painted with thicker lines.



Mirage 50FC No. 504 with a painting scheme modified from the original (black nose cone paint and numerals different from the originals), operating at Chabunco Air Base in 1987. (Rino Poletti collection)



Mirage 50FC No. 504, with its new air superiority painting scheme, operating at Chabunco Air Base. (Rino Poletti collection)

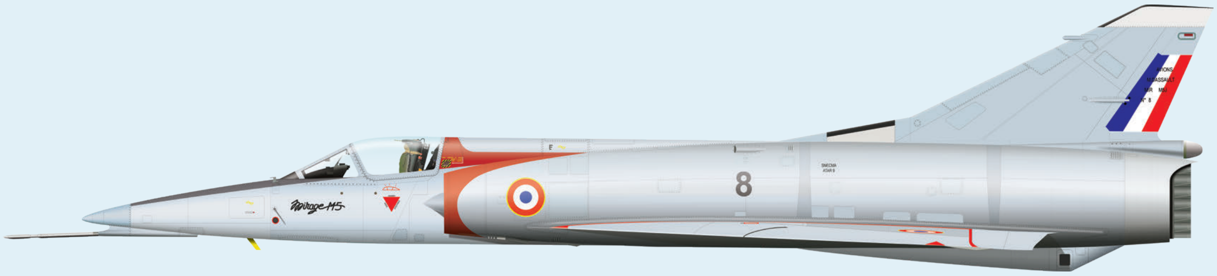
Pantera

This Mirage 50FC plane was converted to the Pantera standard in the mid-1990s. Subsequently, it continued to operate in aviation Group No. 4 and in 2002 participated in Exercise Cruzex 2002, in the city of Natal, Brazil. In October 2004 it participated in the Salitre Exercise. It was finally decommissioned along with the rest of the fleet on 28 December 2007. Later it was transferred to Santiago to be stored in the Supply Wing at El Bosque Air Base, waiting to be sold, along with other Pantera and Mirage Elkans.

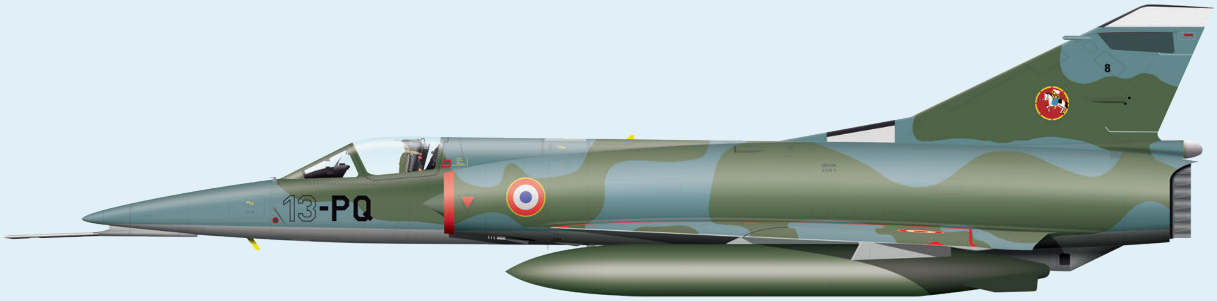
Mirage Pantera No. 504, next to the No. 503 in a hangar of the Photogrammetric Service (SAF). (Luis Quintana)

Mirage Pantera No. 504 and No. 501 participating in the Salitre 2004 exercise, parked on the flight line at Los Condores Air Base, Iquique. (Via Antonio Segovia)

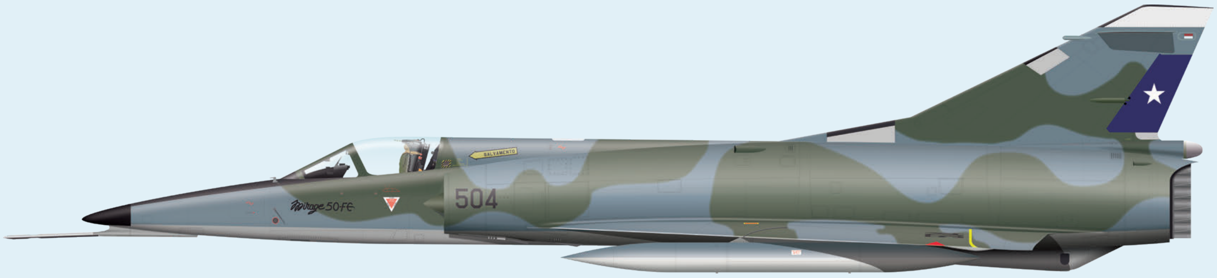
Mirage 5J, No. 8, Israeli Air Force, Julio de 1973.



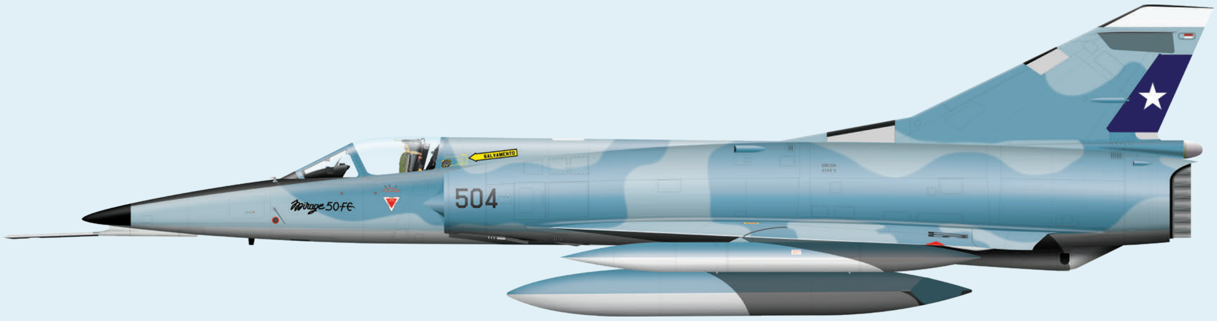
Mirage 5F, No. 8, 13-PQ, 2/13 Alpes Fighter Squadron, Armée de l'Air, Colmar airbase, 1979.



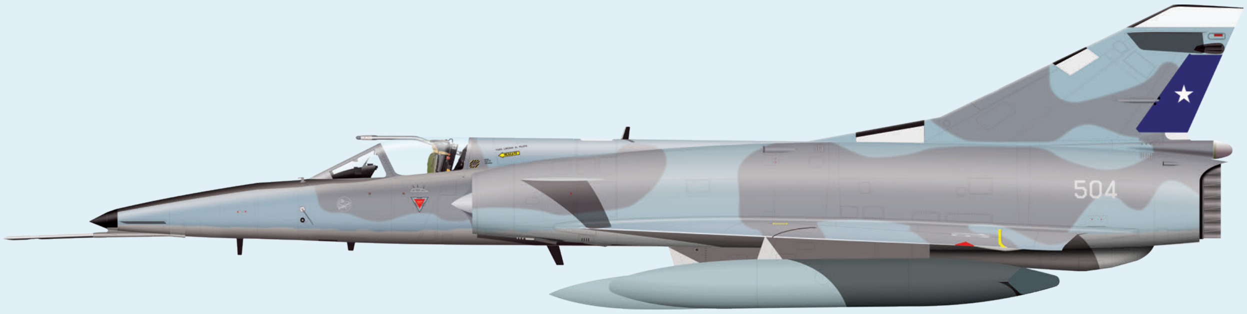
Mirage 50FC, No. 8, No. FACh 504, Aviation Group No. 4, Chilean Air Force, Pudahuel airbase, Santiago, 1983.

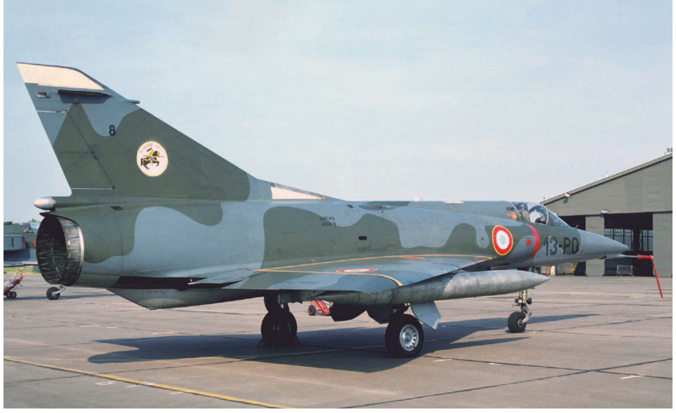

SALVAMENTO
Mirage 50FC
504

Mirage 50FC, No. 8, No. FACh 504, Aviation Group No. 4, Chilean Air Force, Chabunco airbase, Punta Arenas, 1987.

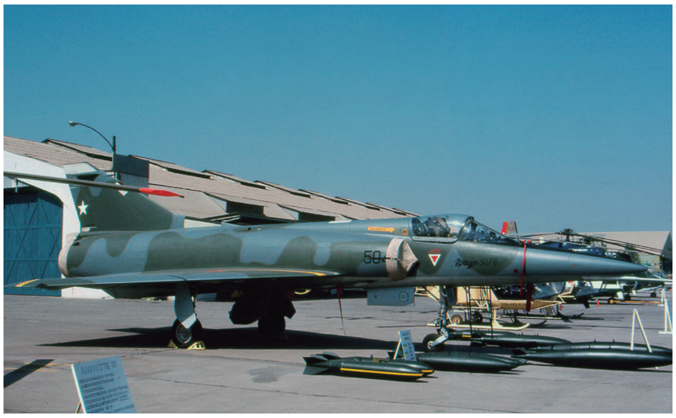

SALVAMENTO
Mirage 50FC
504

Mirage 50CN Pantera, No 8, No. 504, Aviation Group No. 4, Chilean Air Force, Chabunco airbase, Punta Arenas, 2006.

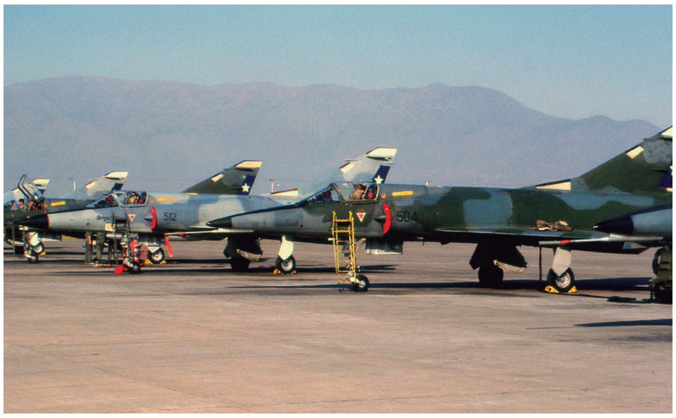




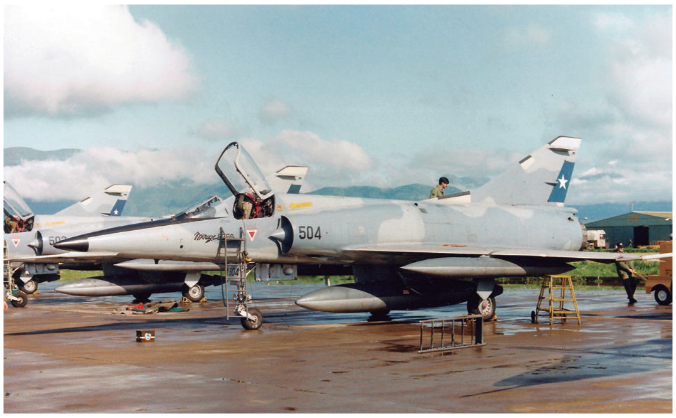
Mirage 5F, No. 8, 13-PQ, from 2/13 Alps fighter squadron, arrived at Strabourg-Entzheim, on June 4, 1978. (Eric Moreau)



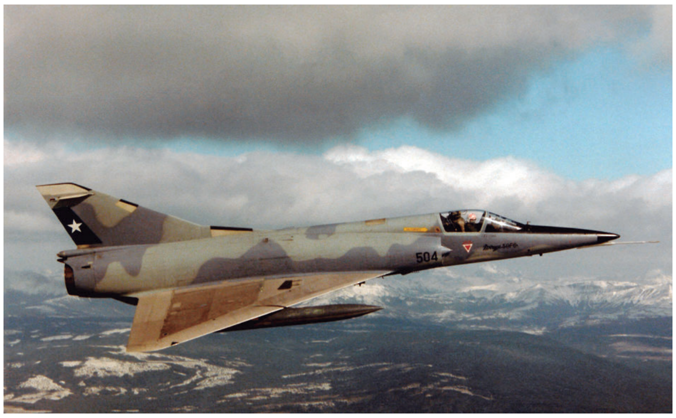
Mirage 50FC No. 504, from Aviation Group No. 4, sporting the original painting scheme, on static dis-play at FIDA 1984. (Via Javier Muñoz)



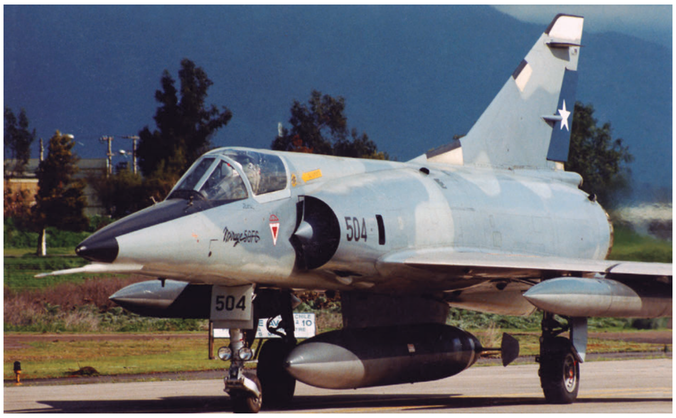
Mirage 50FC No. 504, on the flight line of the Aviation Group No. 4 in Pudahuel, next to the Mirage 50C planes. (Via Javier Muñoz)



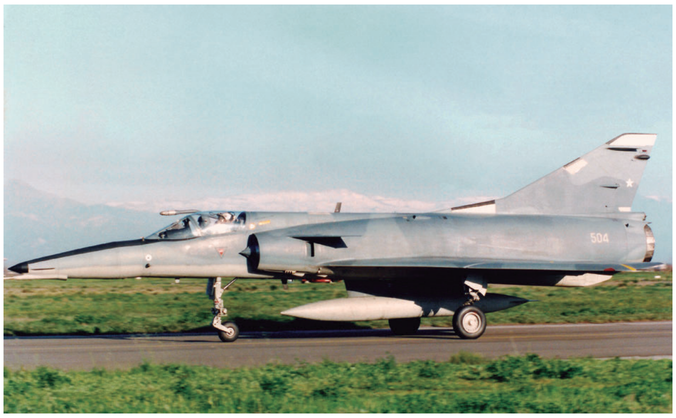
Mirage 50FC No. 504, operating at Pudahuel Air Base for a Military Parade. (Patrick Laureau)



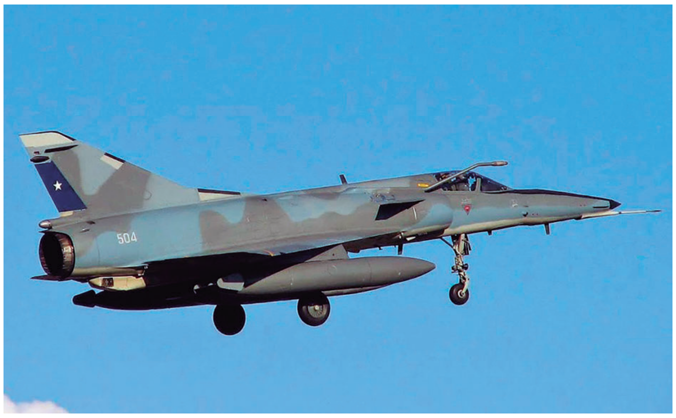
Mirage No. 504, from Aviation Group No. 4, with the first air superiority painting scheme and with replacement of the right wing. (Patrick Laureau)



Mirage 50FC No. 504, from Aviation Group No. 4, sporting the air superiority painting scheme. (Patrick Laureau)



Mirage Pantera No. 504, sporting the first air superiority painting scheme at Los Cerrillos Air Base. (Claudio Cáceres)



Mirage Pantera No. 504, sporting the latest air superiority painting scheme in 2007. (Luis Quintana)

505

Mirage 5J

This Mirage 5J series was built for the Israeli Air Force, with the No. 16. It made its first test flight on 28 March 1968 by Dassault test pilot Marcel Tixador.

Mirage 5F

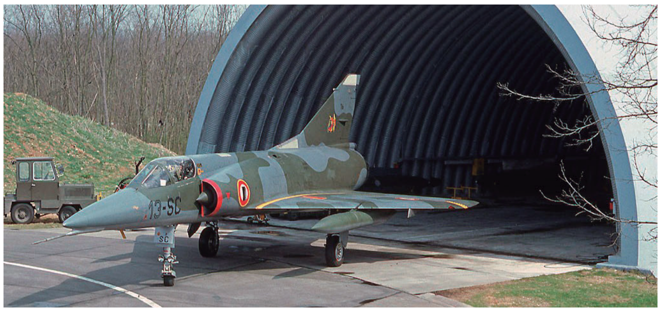
After the embargo imposed by President De Gaulle on Israel, this plane was assigned to the French Air Force on February 1, 1974, and it was stored in the EAA 601 Transfer Unit of the Châteaudun Air Base until August 20, 1975.

Subsequently, it was sent for three weeks, until September 4, 1975, to the Industrial Aeronautics Workshop AIA 584 to be converted to 5F variant, replacing its Atar 9C-5 engine with the 9C-7, as well as its starting engine (Compressed air to electric). It also received the new camouflage painting scheme. Once modified and painted, it was sent to the EAA 601 Transfer Unit again for storage, until November 17, 1977.

Service in the Armée de l'Air

Once removed from storage, this plane was put into operation at the Armée de l'Air on 17 November 1977, in 3/13 Auvergne fighter squadron, sporting the 13-SC serial. Between June 1 and November 16, 1978, it was sent to the Industrial Aeronautics Workshop AIA 584 to receive a maintenance inspection. Once the inspection was completed, it passed briefly to the 15/013 Maintenance Group, until November 27, 1978. It was stored in the EAA 601 Transfer Unit again, until May 11, 1979. Later it was registered again in the 15/013 GERMAS Group until May 28, 1979.

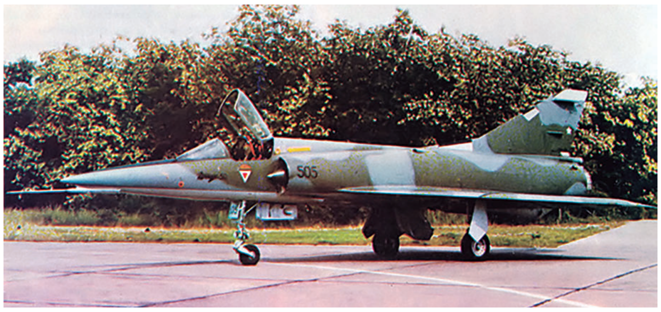
On May 28, 1979, it was bought by AMD/BA, to be modified to Mirage 50 variant and sold to the Chilean Air Force. At the time of the retirement of the Armée de l'Air, this plane logged 202:00 flight hours.



Mirage 5F, No. 16, 13-SC from the 3/13 Auvergne Fighter Squadron of the Armée de l'Air, in 1978, which would be delivered to the FACh as No. 505. (Alexandre Gannier)

Mirage 50FC

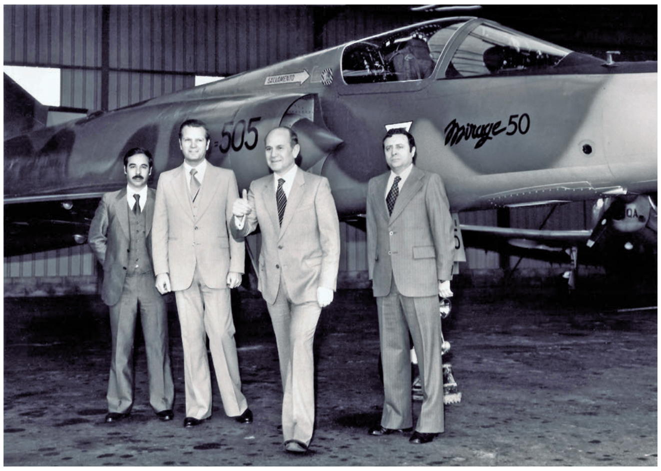
Mirage 5F No. 16 was modified to M50 variant, receiving its new Atar 9K-50 engine and communications and navigation equipment required by the Chilean Air Force. The painting scheme used by the Armée de l'Air was kept, as well as the stencils written in French. The white star was painted to the rudder and received the 505 series.



Mirage 50FC No. 505, ready for delivery to the FACh, in France, 1980. (Rino Poletti collection)

Service in the Chilean Air Force

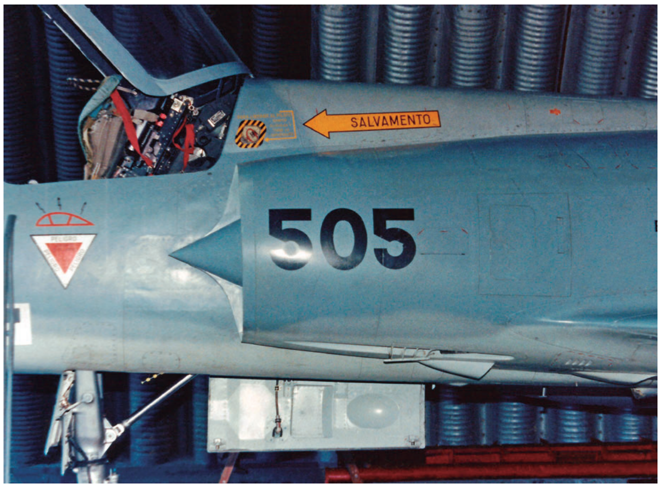
The Mirage 50FC No. 505 was delivered on June 26, 1980, and was assigned to the Aviation Group No. 4, along with the other seven planes bought. It was transported disassembled by air from France and reassembled in Chile by specialists from the Chilean Air Force, with the advice of Dassault technicians.



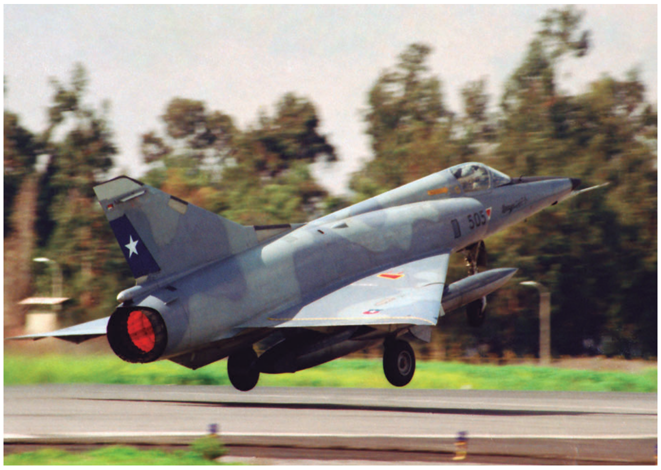
Reception ceremony of the Mirage 50 in France, on March 18, 1980. The Chilean delegation poses in front of Mirage No. 505. (Via Sergio Contardo)

Mirage 50FC No. 505 operated mainly in the home of Aviation Group No. 4 at the Pudahuel Air Base, doing deployments to different parts of Chile from 1981 to operate with other fighter planes and gain experience in the role assigned to the fleet.

In 1986 it was transferred to the new place of settlement of Aviation Group No. 4, at the Chabunco Air Base, Punta Arenas. Shortly after operating in the Austral zone, it received a new air superiority painting scheme, similar to the Mirage 50C/DC planes, arrived in 1983. The pattern of the scheme and the colors were similar; however, the numerals did not follow the French standard, painted with thicker lines.



Mirage 50FC No. 505, with its air superiority painting scheme, in one of the shelters built for the operation of Aviation Group No. 4 at Chabunco Air Base. (Rino Poletti collection)

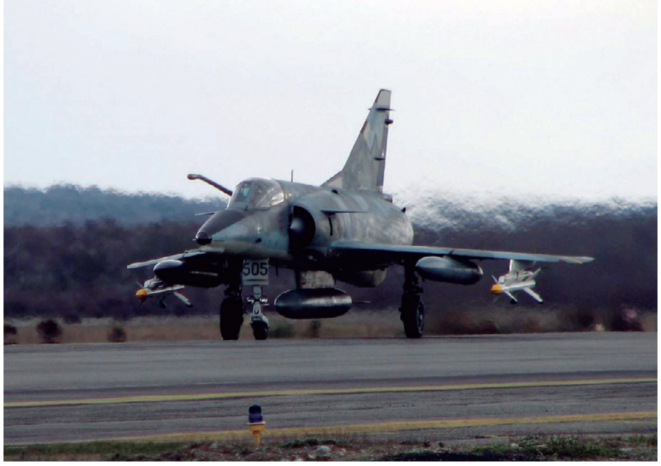


Mirage 50FC No. 505 with its new painting scheme, taking off from Los Cerrillos Air Base. (Alessandro Bocca collection)

Reception ceremony of the Mirage 50 in France, on March 18, 1980. The Chilean delegation poses in front of Mirage No. 505. (Via Sergio Contardo)

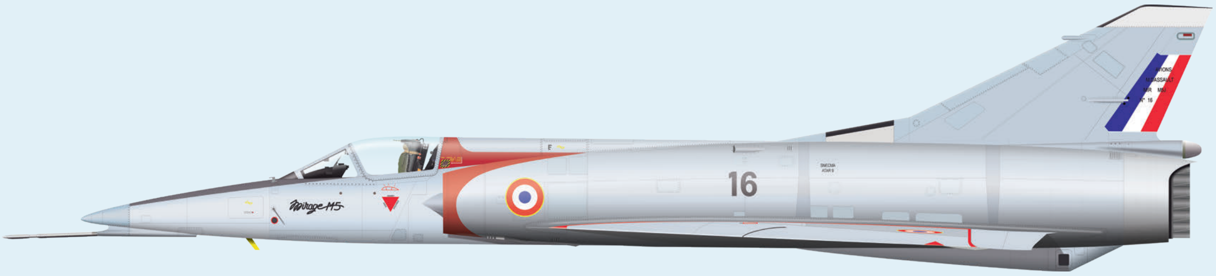
Pantera

Mirage 50FC No. 505 was converted to the Pantera standard in the mid-1990s. It continued to fly in the No. 4 Aviation Group until the end of its operational life in 2007. It is currently preserved in one of the hangars of Aviation Group No. 10 at the Pudahuel Air Base.

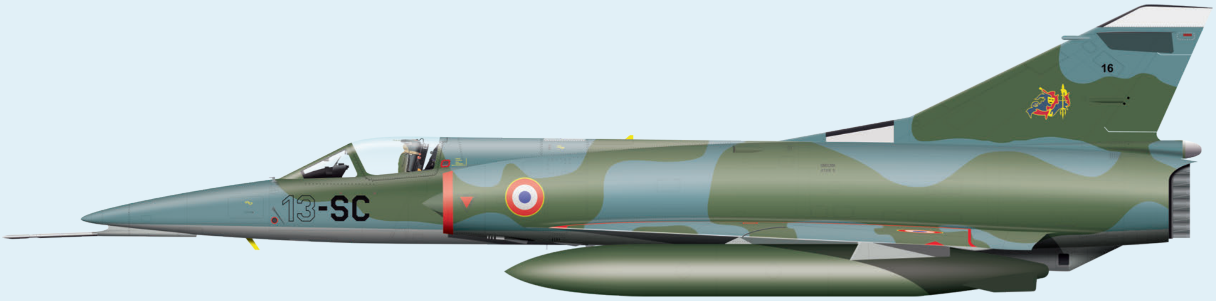


Mirage Pantera No. 505 armed with o live Python 3 missiles at Chabunco Air Base. (Chilean Air Force)

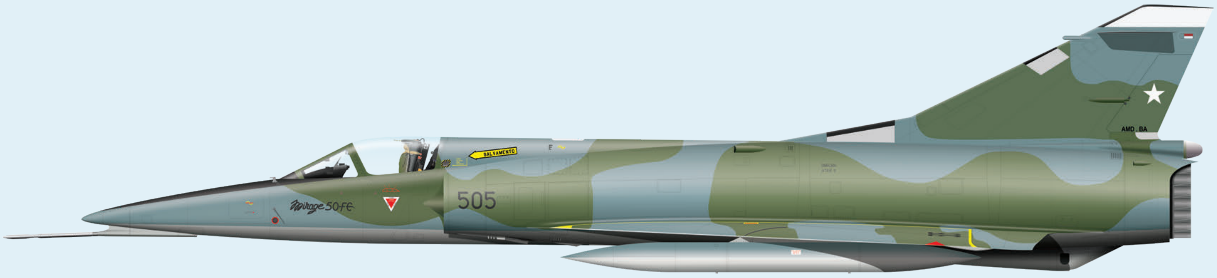
Mirage 5J, No. 16, Israeli Air Force, March 1968.


Mirage M5
16

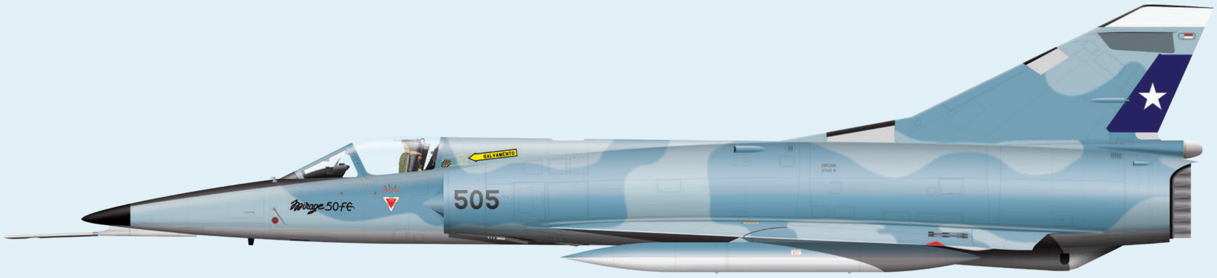
Mirage 5F, No. 16, 13-SC, 3/13 Auvergne Fighter Squadron, Armée de l'Air, Colmar airbase, 1978.



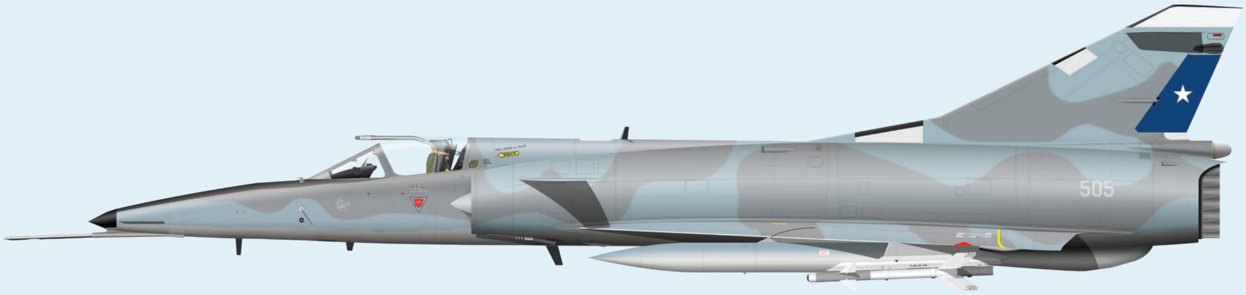
Mirage 50FC, No. 16, No. FACh 505, Aviation Group No. 4, Chilean Air Force, Pudahuel airbase, Santiago, 1980.

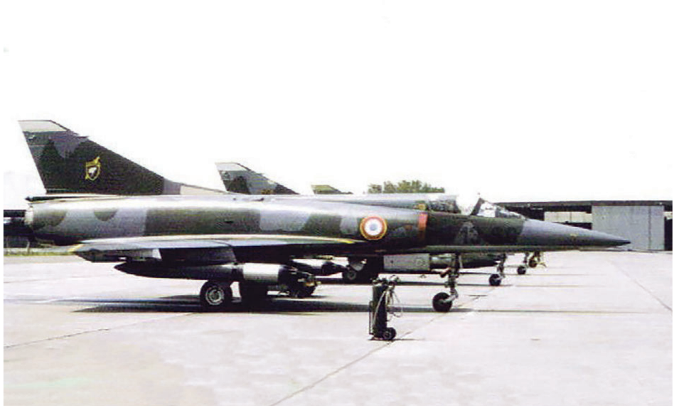

SALVAMENTO
Mirage 50FC
505

Mirage 50FC, No. 16, No. FACh 505, Aviation Group No. 4, Chilean Air Force, Chabunco airbase, Punta Arenas, 1987.

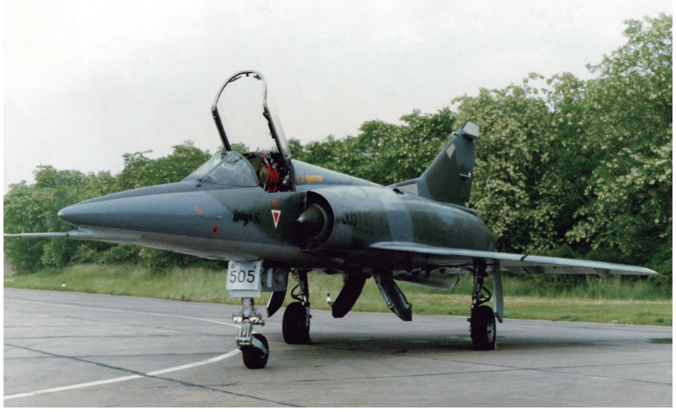

SALVAMENTO
Mirage 50FC
505

Mirage 50CN Pantera, No. 16, No. FACh 505, Aviation Group No. 4, Chilean Air Force, Chabunco airbase, Punta Arenas, 2006.

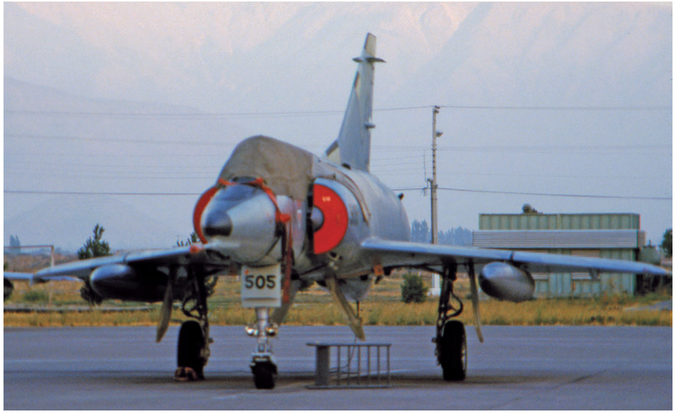




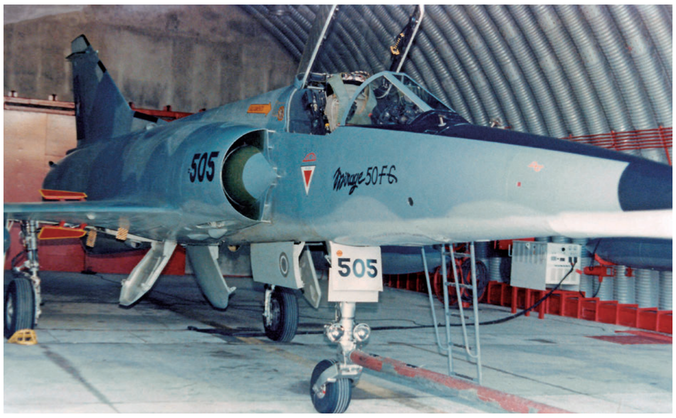
Mirage 5F No. 16 (13-SC), during a stopover in Orange airbase, May 1978. (Marcel Fluet)



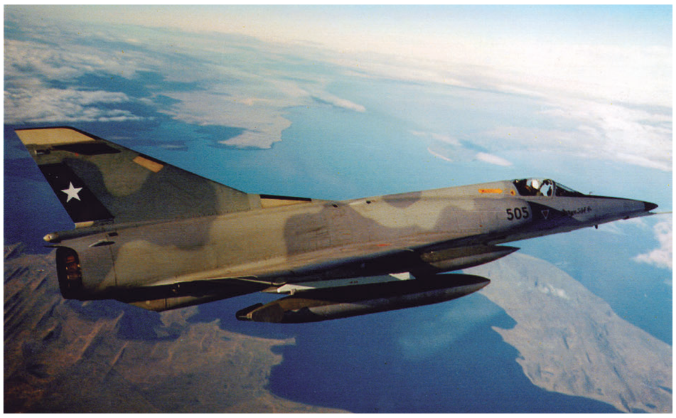
Mirage 50FC No. 505, at the reception ceremony in France, note that the variant name "Mirage 50" does not have the suffix FC. (Rino Poletti collection)



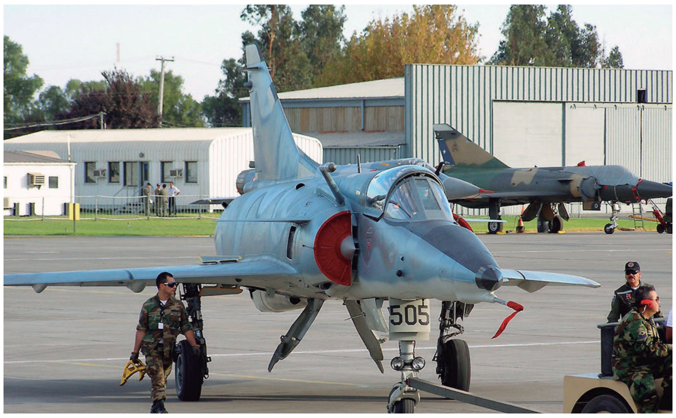
Mirage 50FC No. 505, parked on the tarmac of Aviation Group No. 4, Pudahuel Air Base, January 1986. (Via Javier Muñoz)



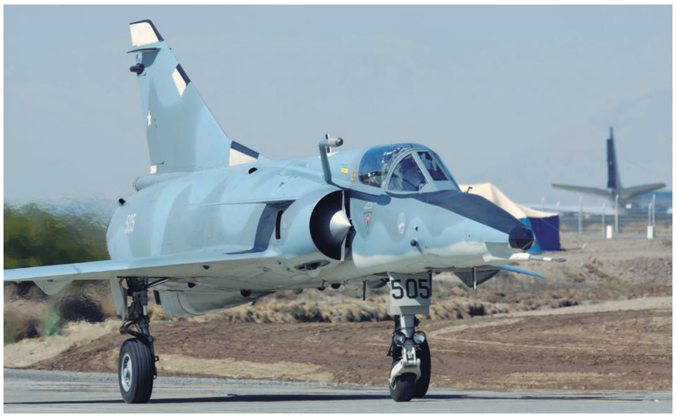
Mirage 50FC No. 505, with its new air superiority painting scheme in a shelter at Chabunco Air Base. (Rino Poletti collection)



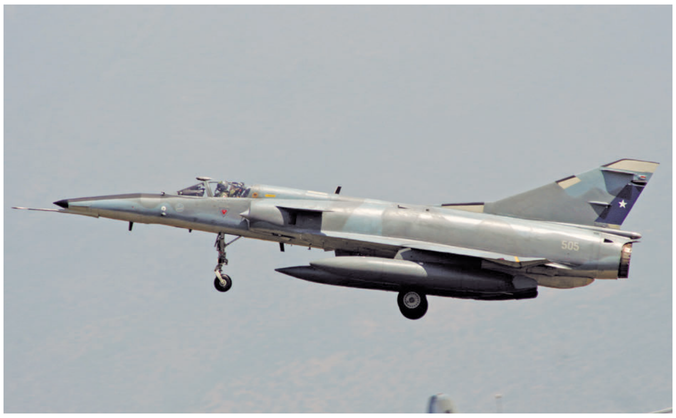
Mirage 50FC No. 505, flying over the Magellan channels and carrying a Shafrir launcher. (Rino Poletti collection)



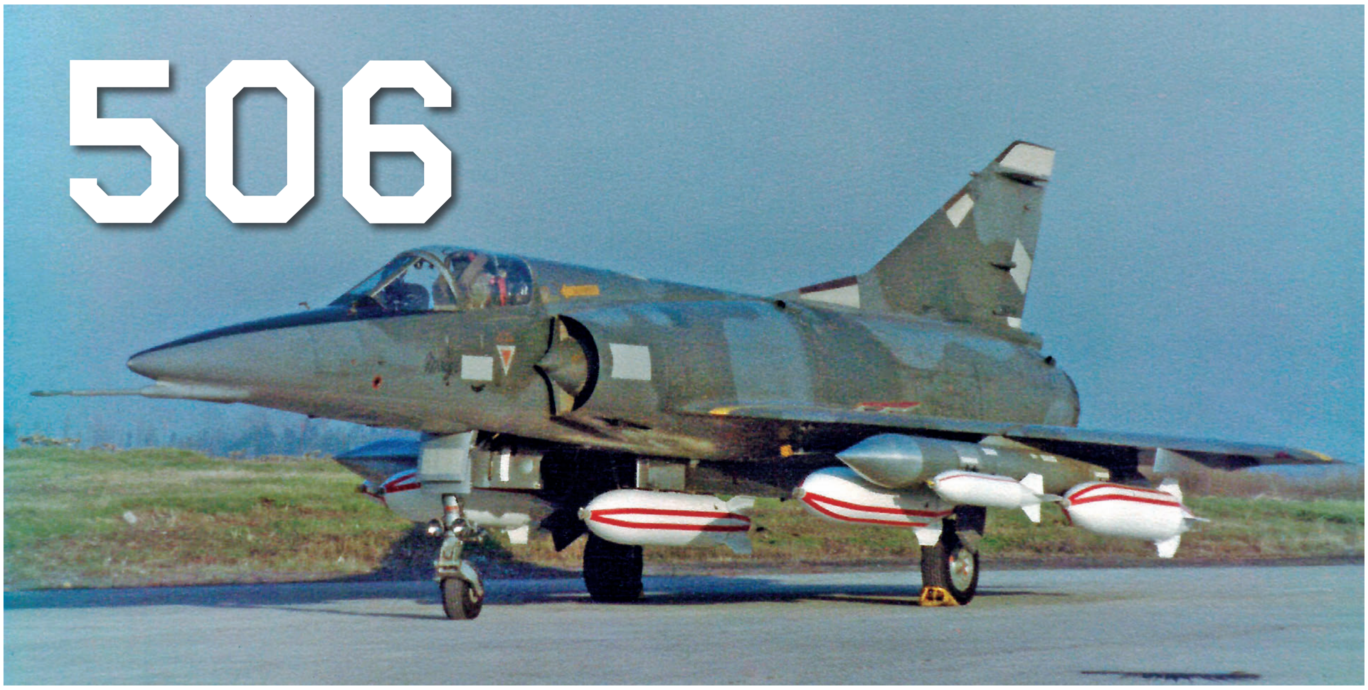
Mirage Pantera 50FC No. 505, during its presentation at FIDAE 2006. (Raúl Zamora)



Mirage Pantera No. 505, during its presentation at FIDAE 2006, at the Pudahuel Air Base. (Alessandro Bocca collection)



Mirage Pantera No. 505, sporting the latest air superiority painting scheme, November 2006. (Alvaro Romero)



Mirage 5J

This 5J series plane was built for the Israeli Air Force, with the No. 23. It made its first test flight on July 8, 1968, by Dassault test pilot Marcel Tixador.

Mirage 5F

After the embargo imposed by President De Gaulle on Israel, this plane was transferred to the Armée de l'Air on May 3, 1973, and it was stored in the EAA 601 Transfer Unit of the Châteaudun Air Base, until April 10, 1975.

Subsequently, it was sent for 3 weeks, until April 29, 1975, to the Industrial Aeronautics Workshop AIA 584 to be converted to model 5F, replacing its Atar 9C-5 engine with the 9C-7, as well as its starting engine (Compressed air to electric). It also received the new camouflage painting scheme. Once modified and painted, it was sent to the EAA 601 Transfer Unit again for storage until October 21, 1977.

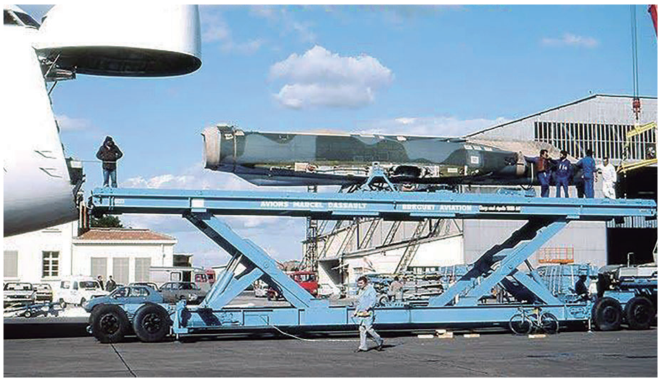
Mirage 5F No. 23, leaving the storage process in a hangar of the EAA 601. (Dassault)

Service in the Armée de l'Air

Once removed from storage, this plane was put into operation in the French Air Force on October 21, 1977, in the 2/13 Alps Fighter Squadron, where it sported the 13-PS serial. Between January 4 and March 13, 1978, it was sent to the Industrial Aeronautics Workshop AIA 584 to receive a maintenance inspection. Once the inspection was completed, it returned to 2/13 Fighter Squadron, using the same serial, until May 29, 1979, when it was acquired by AMD/BA, to be modified to the Mirage 50 standard and sold to the Chilean Air Force. At the time of the retirement of the Armée de l'Air, this plane logged 379:00 flight hours.

Mirage 50FC

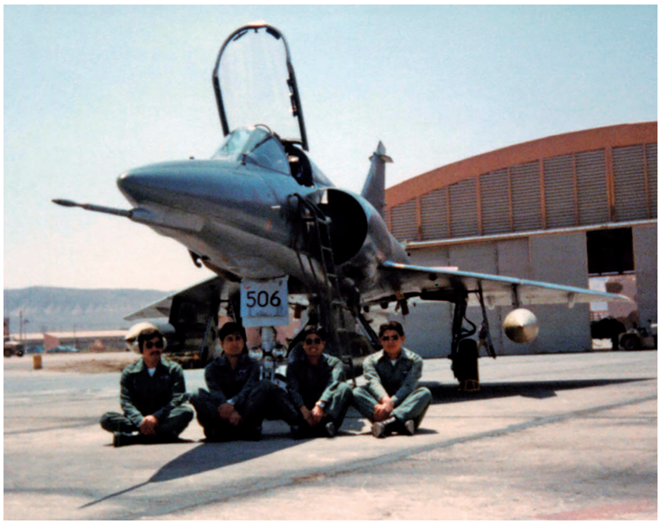
Mirage 5F No. 23 was modified to standard 50, receiving its new Atar 9K-50 engine and communications and navigation equipment required by the Chilean Air Force. The painting scheme used by the Armée de l'Air was kept, as well as the stencils written in French. The white star was painted to the rudder and received the 506 serials.



Mirage 50FC No. 506 being transported for its journey to Chile. (Mario Magliochetti)

Service in the Chilean Air Force

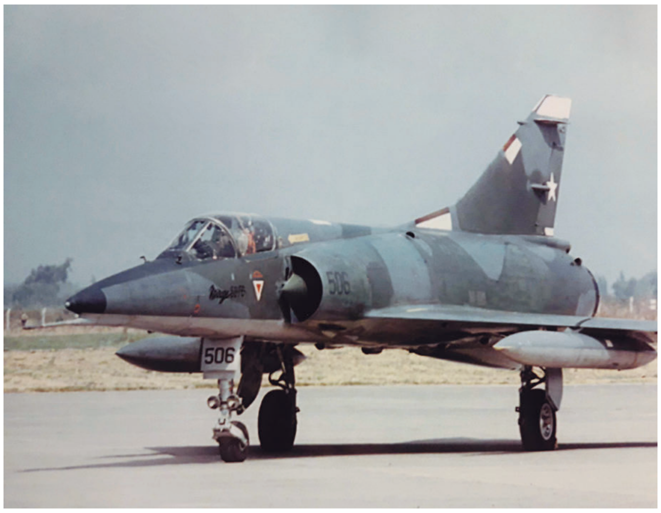
Mirage 50FC No. 506 was delivered on June 26, 1980, and was registered in Aviation Group No. 4, along with the other seven planes bought. It was transported disassembled in its main components from France and reassembled in Chile by specialists of the Chilean Air Force, with the advice of Dassault technicians.



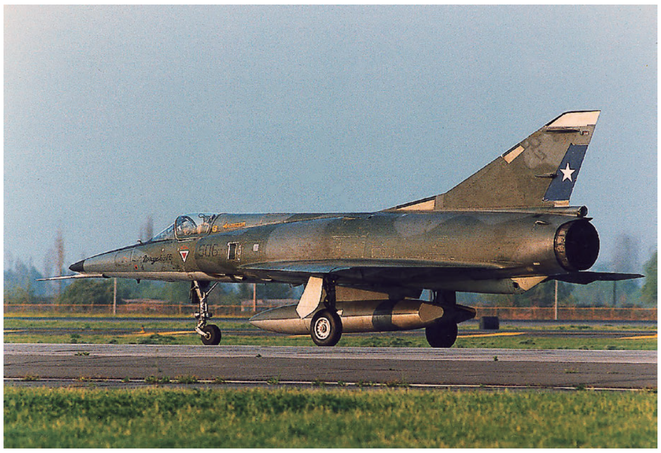
Mirage 50FC No. 506 sporting its first painting scheme during a deployment to Cerro Moreno Air Base in 1981. (Via Julio Arróspide)

Mirage 50FC No. 506 operated mainly in the home of Aviation Group No. 4 at Pudahuel Air Base, doing deployments to different airbases of Chile from 1981 to operate with other combat planes and gain experience in the role assigned to the fleet.

In 1986 it was transferred to the new place of settlement of Aviation Group No. 4, at Chabunco Air Base, Punta Arenas. There are no records or photographic evidence that this plane had received the air superiority painting scheme of the Mirage 50C/DC planes and it is most likely that this plane had entered the process of modification to Pantera with the original modified painting scheme.



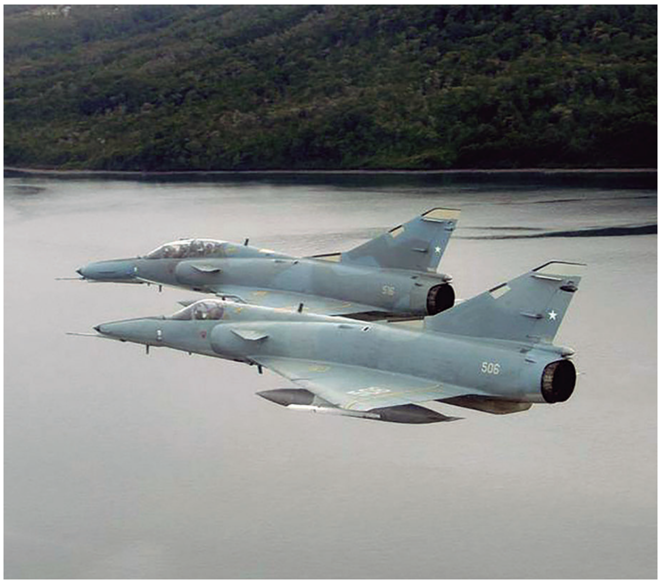
Mirage 50FC No. 506 participating in FIDA 1986, at El Bosque Air Base. (Rino Poletti collection)



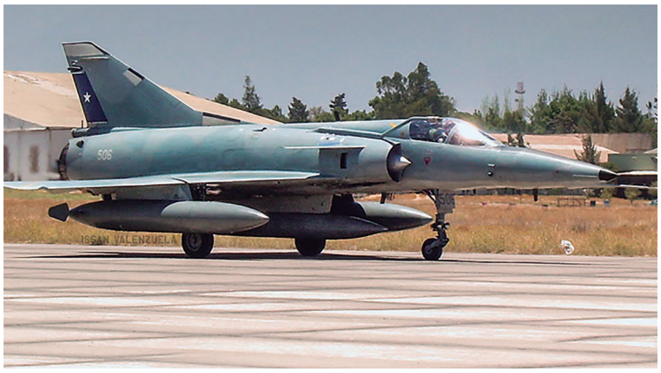
Mirage 50FC No. 506 sporting a variation of the original painting scheme with the blue rudder, black radar radome and more rectangular stencils. (Rino Poletti collection)

Pantera

This Mirage 50FC plane was converted to the Pantera standard in the mid-1990s. It continued to fly in the Aviation Group No. 4 until the end of its operational life in 2007. It is currently preserved in the Supply Wing, El Bosque Air Base, waiting along with other specimens of Pantera and Mirage Elkan to be sold or sold as spare parts.

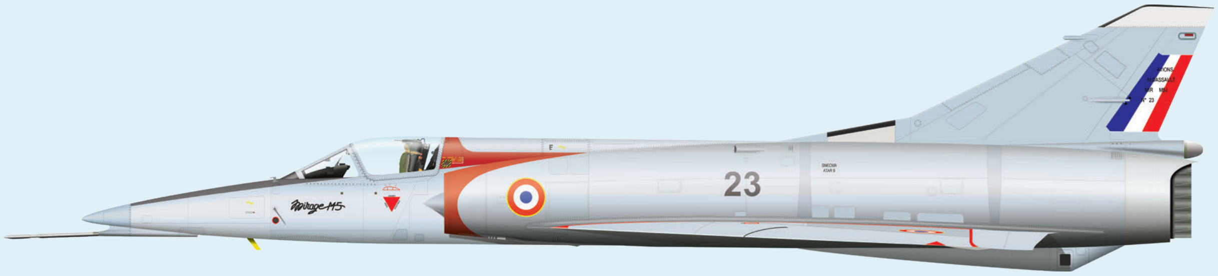


Mirage Pantera No. 506 flying next to the No. 516 between the Patagonian fjords, using the first painting scheme. (Chilean Air Force)

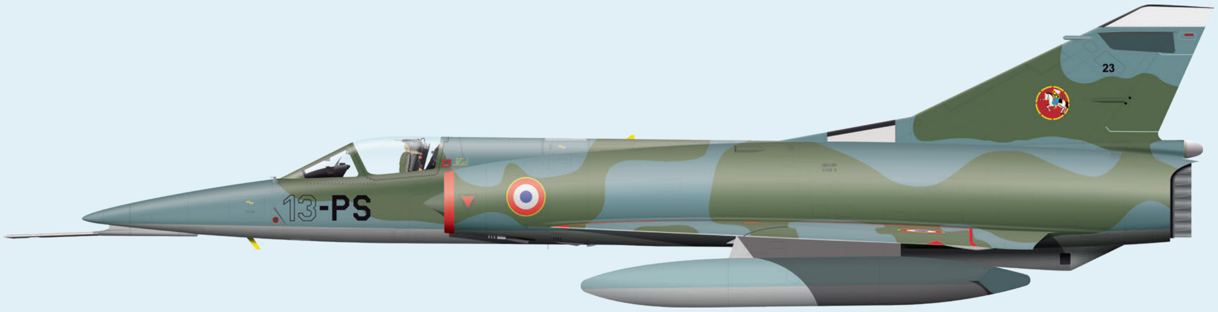


Mirage Pantera No. 506, sporting the latest documented painting scheme. (Isaan Valenzuela)

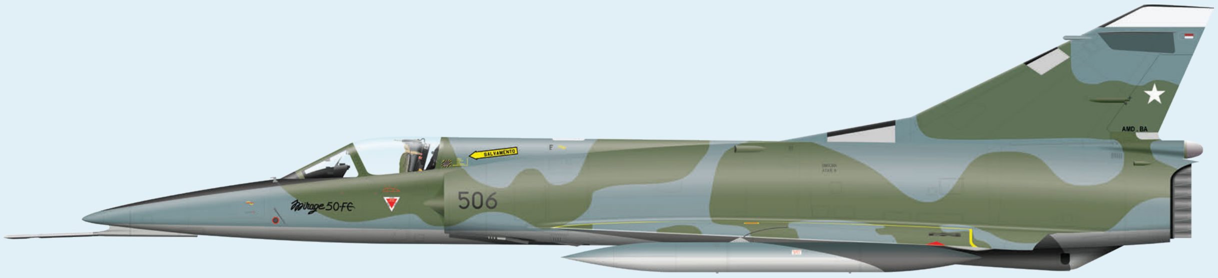
Mirage 5J, No. 23, Israeli Air Force, August 1968.


Mirage M5
23

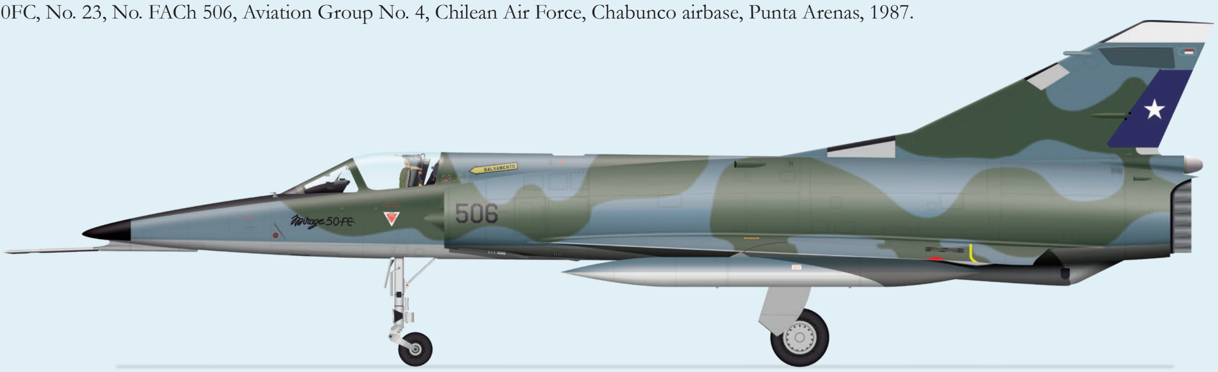
Mirage 5F, No. 23, 13-PS, 2/13 Alpes Fighter Squadron, Armée de l'Air, Colmar airbase, 1979.



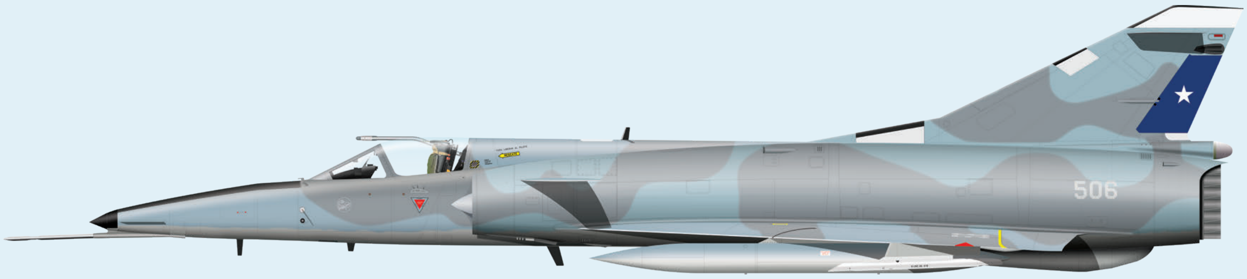
Mirage 50FC, No. 23, No. FACh 506, Aviation Group No. 4, Chilean Air Force, Pudahuel airbase, Santiago, 1981.

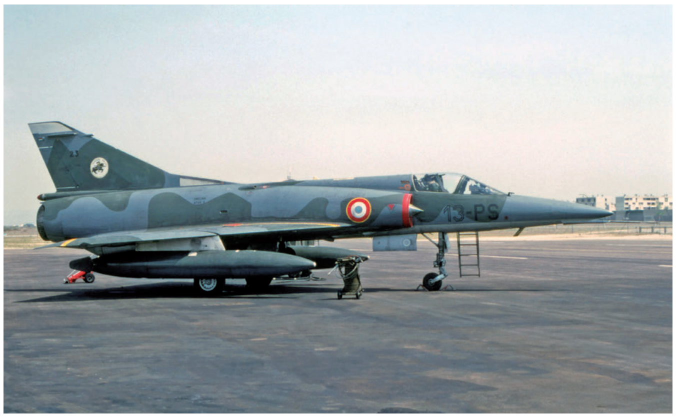

SALVAMENTO
Mirage 50FC
506
AMD-BA

Mirage 50FC, No. 23, No. FACh 506, Aviation Group No. 4, Chilean Air Force, Chabunco airbase, Punta Arenas, 1987.

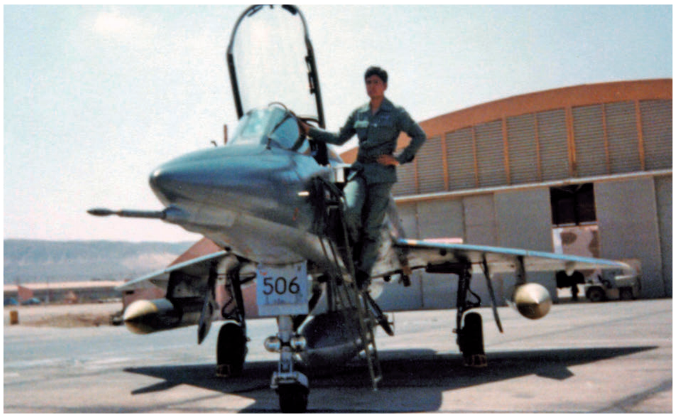

SALVAMENTO
Mirage 50FC
506

Mirage 50CN Pantera, No. 23, No. FACh 506, Aviation Group No. 4, Chilean Air Force, Chabunco airbase, Punta Arenas, 1989.

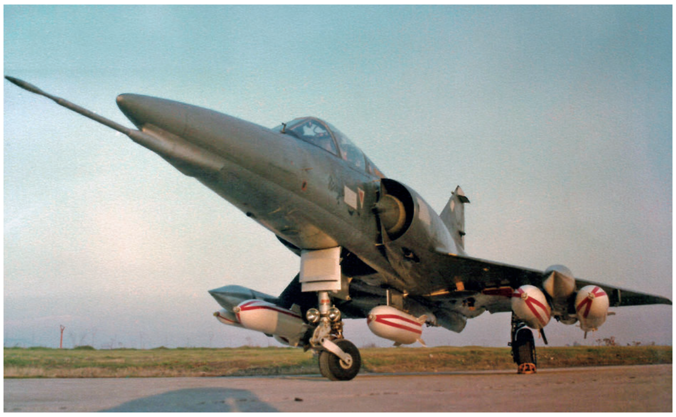




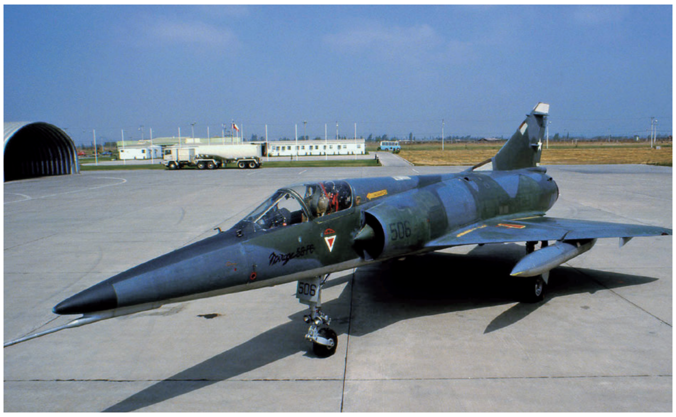
Mirage 5F No. 23, 13-PS of the 2/13 Alpine Fighter Squadron, photographed at Colmar Air Base in May 1979. (J. Sirougnet)



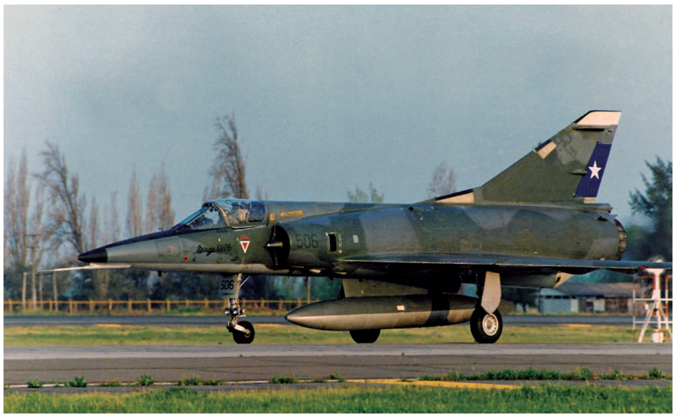
The author (Julio Arróspide) on the ladder of the Mirage 50FC No. 506, during a deployment to the Cerro Moreno Air Base, 1981. (Julio Arróspide)



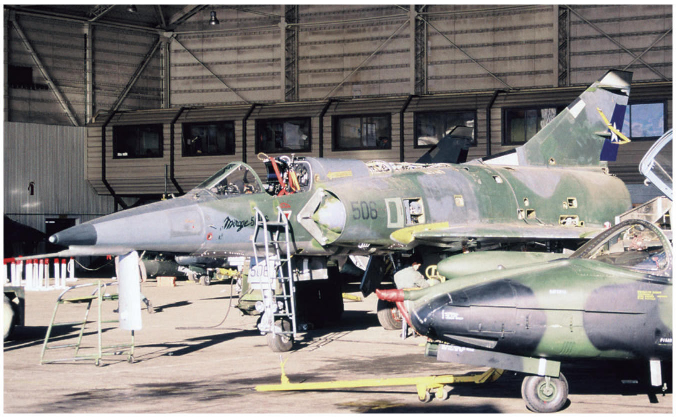
Mirage 50FC No. 506, with its censored identification photographed for Cardoen cluster bomb testing. (Rino Poletti collection)



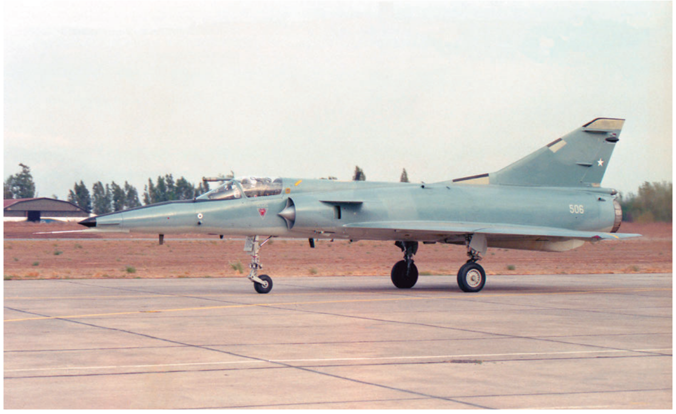
Mirage 50FC No. 506, with a variation of the original painting scheme at Pudahuel Air Base. (Via Javier Muñoz)



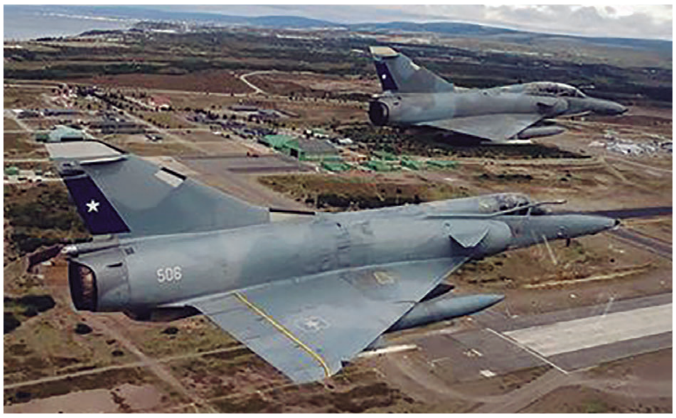
Mirage 50FC No. 506, with the rudder painted in blue a variation from the original painting scheme. (Rino Poletti collection)



Mirage 50FC No. 506, during a maintenance inspection at Chabunco Air Base. (Via Javier Muñoz)

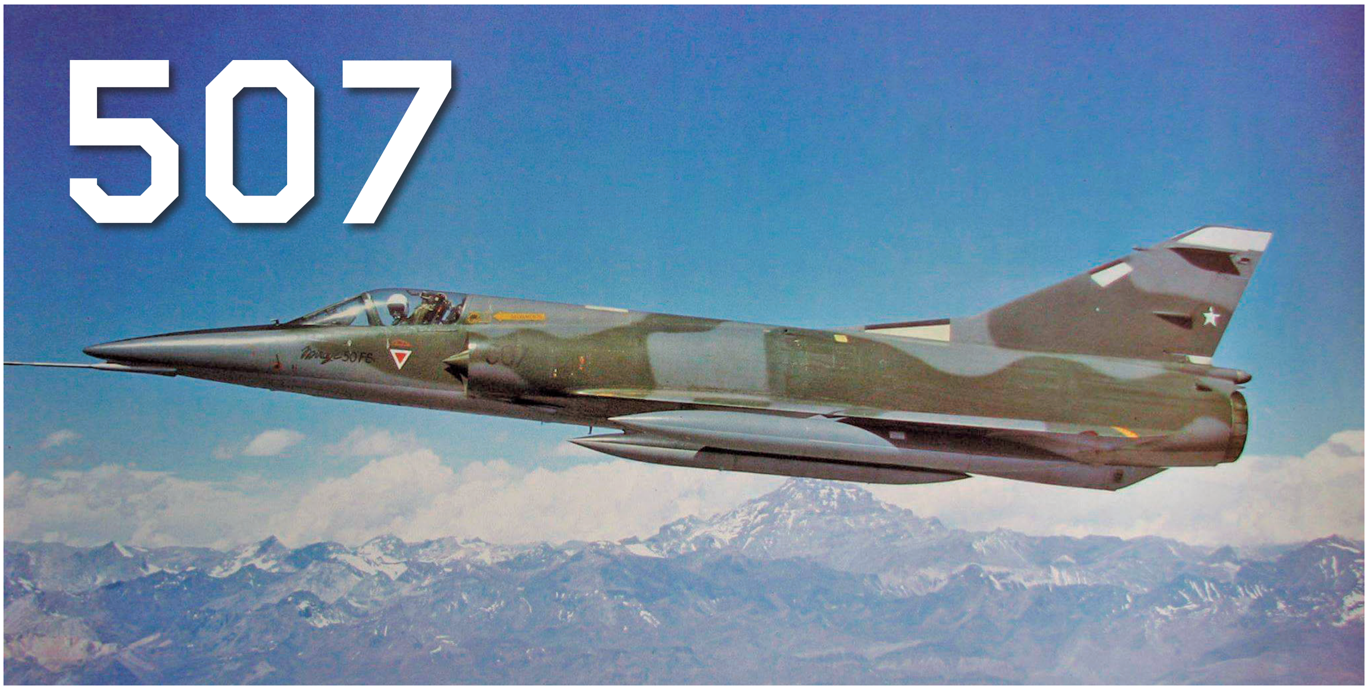


Mirage Pantera No. 506, sporting the first air superiority painting scheme in FIDAE 2004. (Alvaro Romero)



Mirage Pantera No. 506, flying in formation approaching to the Chabunco Air Base. (Duncan Silva)

507



Mirage 5J

This Mirage of the 5J series was built for the Israeli Air Force, with the No. 28. It made its first test flight on 24 September 1968 by Dassault test pilot Marcel Tixador.

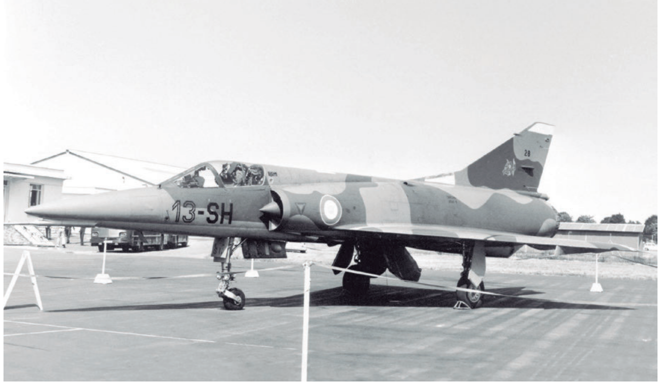
Mirage 5F

After the embargo imposed by President De Gaulle on Israel, this Mirage was stored in the EAA 601 Transfer Unit of the Châteaudun Air Base on October 30, 1973, until January 17, 1975.

It was then sent for nine months, until October 23, 1975, to the AIA 584 Industrial Aeronautics Work-shop to be converted to a 5F variant, replacing its Atar 9C-5 engine with the 9C-7, as well as its starting engine (Compressed air to electric). It also received the new camouflage painting scheme. Once modified and painted it was sent to the EAA 601 Transfer Unit again for storage until January 13, 1976.

Service in the Armée de l'Air

Once removed from storage, this Mirage was incorporated into the French Air Force on February 4, 1976, to 3/13 Auvergne fighter squadron, where it sported the 13-SH series, until April 25, 1978. Be-tween this last date and July 6, 1978, it was sent to the Industrial Workshop of Aeronautics AIA 584 to receive a maintenance inspection. Once the inspection was completed, it returned to EC 3/13, but this time it sported the 13-SP series, until May 14, 1979. On May 22, 1979, it was bought by AMD/BA, to be modified to the Mirage 50 standard and sold to the Chilean Air Force. At the time of the retirement of the Armée de l'Air, this Mirage logged 360:00 flight hours.



Mirage 5F No. 28, belonging to 3/13 Auvergne fighter squadron, with the identifier 13-SH, circa 1978. (Via Eric Moreau)

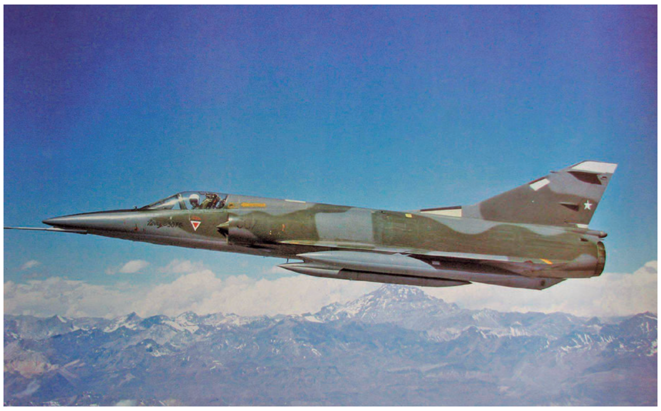
Mirage 50FC

Mirage 5F No. 28 was modified to standard 50, receiving its new Atar 9K-50 engine and communications and navigation equipment required by the Chilean Air Force. The painting scheme used by the Armée de l'Air was kept, as well as the stencils written in French. The white star was painted on the rudder and received the 507 series.

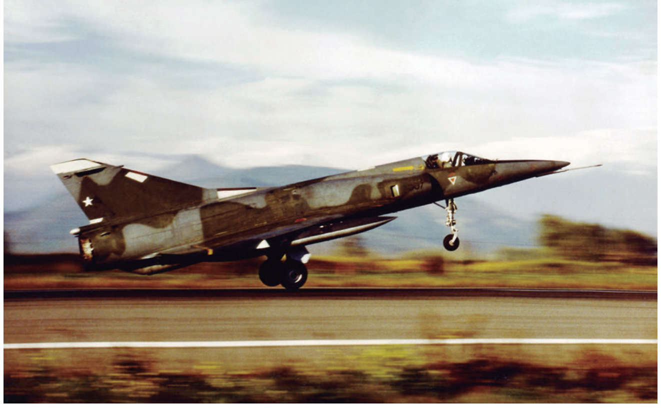
Service in the Chilean Air Force

Mirage 50FC No. 507 was delivered on June 26, 1980, and was registered in the Aviation Group No. 4, along with the other seven Mirages bought. It was transported disassembled from France by air and reassembled in Chile by specialists from the Chilean Air Force, with the advice of Dassault technicians.

Mirage 50FC No. 507 operated mainly in the home of Aviation Group No. 4, at Pudahuel Air Base, doing deployments to different parts of Chile from 1981 to operate with other fighter planes and gain experience in the role assigned to the fleet.

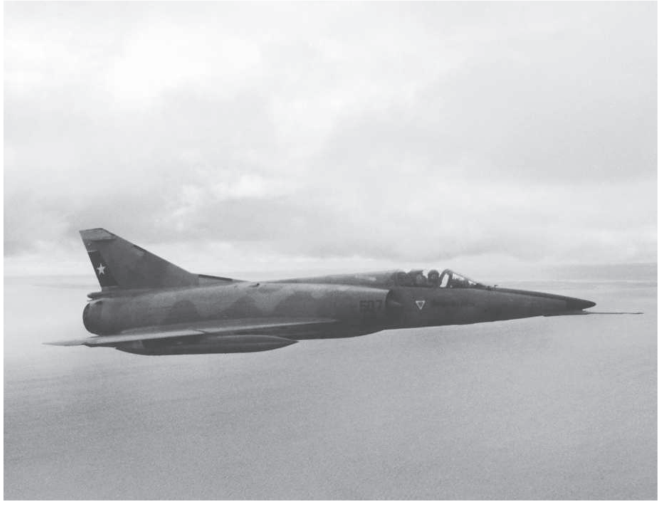


Mirage 50FC No. 507 flying over the Andes mountain, sporting the first painting scheme. (Chilean Air Force)



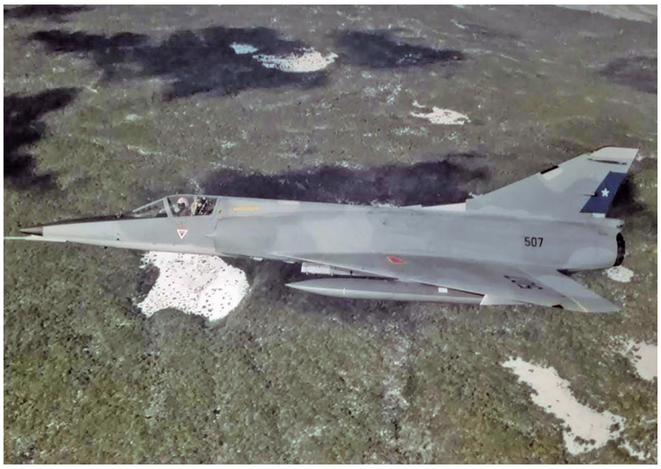
Mirage 50FC No. 507 taking off from Arturo Merino Benítez Airport, sporting its first painting scheme. (Rino Poletti collection)

In 1986 this Mirage was transferred to the new place of settlement of Aviation Group No. 4, at the Chabunco Air Base, Punta Arenas. Shortly after operating in the Austral zone, it received a new air superiority painting scheme, similar to that of the Mirage 50C/DC, arrived in 1983. The pattern of the scheme applied to the 507 was a little different, especially the bow spots, which more closely resembled the pattern applied to the new Mirage Panteras. The colors were also similar; however, the numerals did not follow the French standard, leaving with thicker strokes. It also kept the name of the variant.



Mirage 50FC No. 507 flying over the Strait of Magellan, sporting the first air superiority painting scheme. (Patrick Laureau)

According to the documentation, this would have been the only Mirage 50FC that sported a second air superiority scheme, with the numeral shifted to the back of the engine and in a smaller format, standardized with the scheme used by the Mirage Panteras.



Mirage 50FC No. 507 flying over the Patagonia zone, sporting the second air superiority painting scheme. (Via Oscar Pereira)

Accident

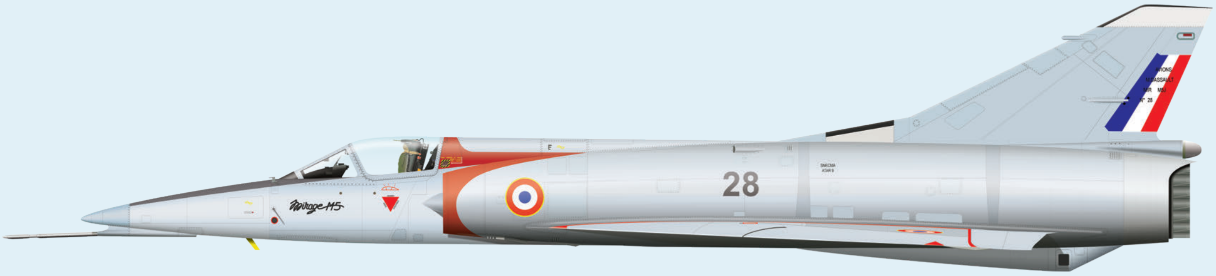
On March 11, 1993, Mirage 50FC No. 507 took off for an operational training maintenance flight (MEO), commanded by captain Claudio Ibacache Escudero. However, during take-off one of the wheels of the main landing gear comes off. The emergency was declared and the emergency procedure for these cases began to apply.

Unfortunately, the configuration of the Mirage provided with two supersonic supplementary fuel tanks of 500 liters, did not allow a forced landing without landing gear, which was consulted and confirmed by Dassault herself. Therefore, the pilot was instructed to start spending fuel and the area of the Pecket Mine was chosen, 40 km north-west of the southern city, place of the firing range of the 4th Air Brigade, in order to be able to perform a controlled ejection, as well as the preparation of the rescue procedure.

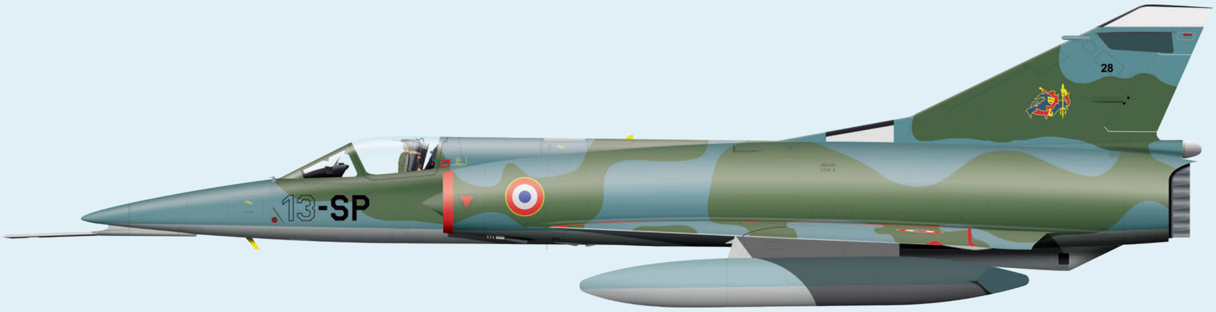
After an hour, Captain Ibacache ejected and was rescued by a helicopter, while the plane crashed, resulting completely destroyed. Despite some recommendations, a chasing plane was not used to film the ejection, which lost the opportunity to have recorded an unprecedented event in the Chilean Air Force history. It had been speculated that this Mirage had already been modified to Pantera, which is not true, since the Pantera project was just in its beginning and the Mi-rage 50FC No. 507 was not yet scheduled for modification.

The news about the loss of this Mirage arrived at Santiago just at a time when the Commander in Chief of the Air Force, Air General Fernando Matthei and Defense Minister Patricio Rojas were inspecting the Modernization Line of the Pantera in ENAER that March 11.

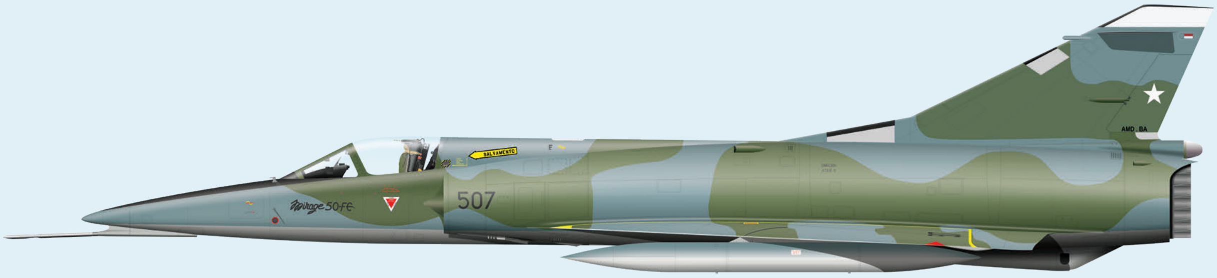
Mirage 5J, No. 28, Israeli Air Force, November 1968.


Mirage M5
28

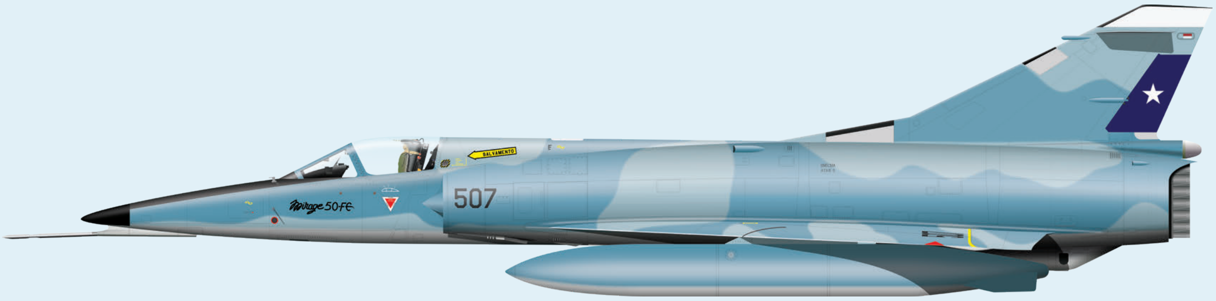
Mirage 5F, No. 28, 13-SP, 3/13 Auvergne Fighter Squadron, Armée de l'Air, Colmar airbase, 1979.



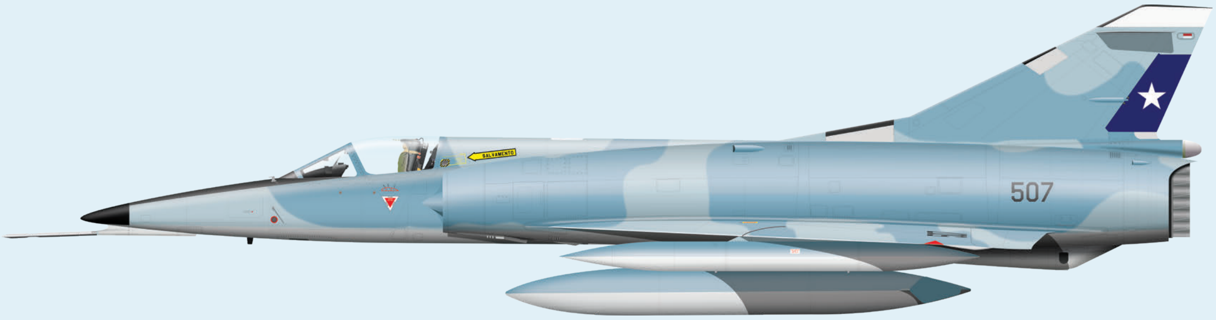
Mirage 50FC, No. 28, No. FACh 507, Aviation Group No. 4, Chilean Air Force, Pudahuel airbase, Santiago, 1981.

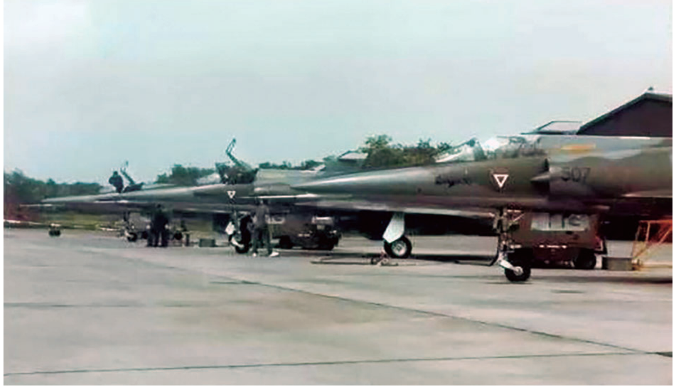

SALVAMENTO
Mirage 50FC
507

Mirage 50FC, No. 28, No. 507, Aviation Group No. 4, Chilean Air Force, Chabunco airbase, Punta Arenas, 1988.

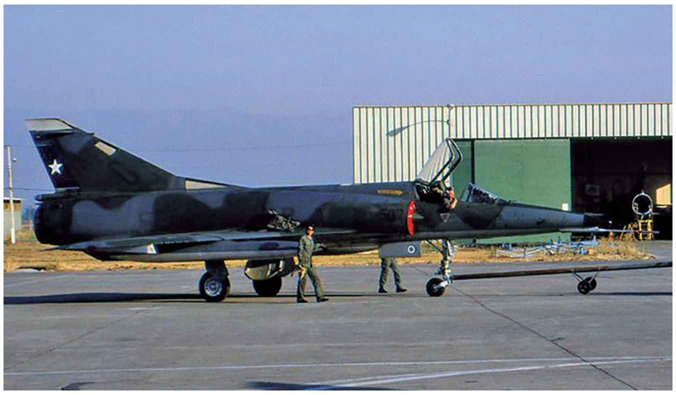

SALVAMENTO
Mirage 50FC
507

Mirage 50FC, No. 28, No. 507, Aviation Group No. 4, Chilean Air Force, Chabunco airbase, Punta Arenas, 1993.

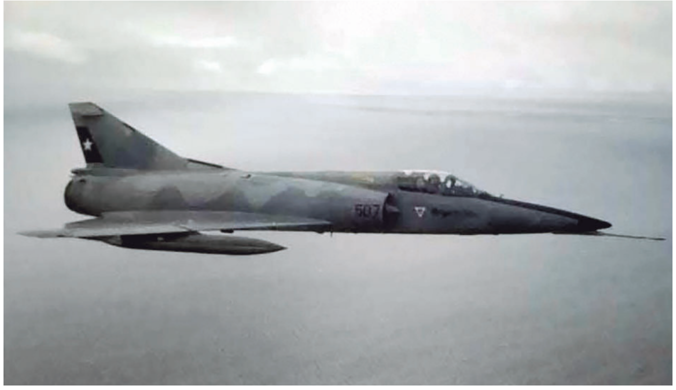

SALVAMENTO
507



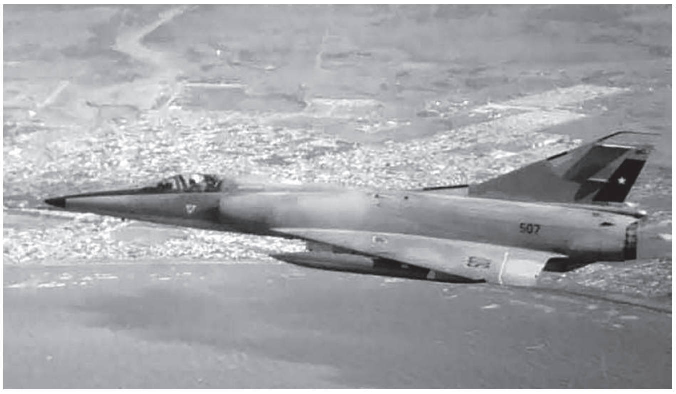
Mirage 50FC No. 507, with the original painting scheme at El Tepual Air Base at the beginning of the Deltas operation. (Via Oscar Pereira)



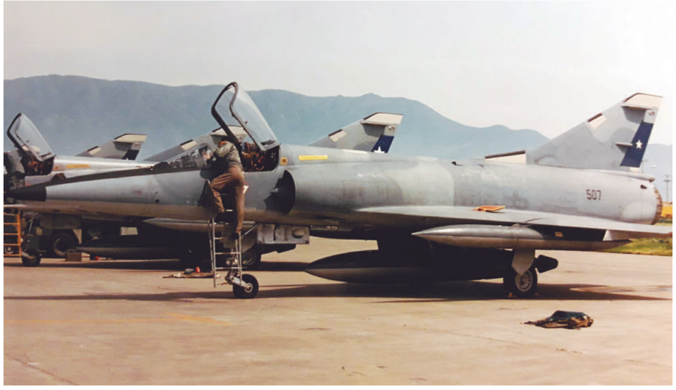
Mirage 50FC No. 507, with a variation of the original painting scheme at Pudahuel Air Base. (Via Javier Muñoz)



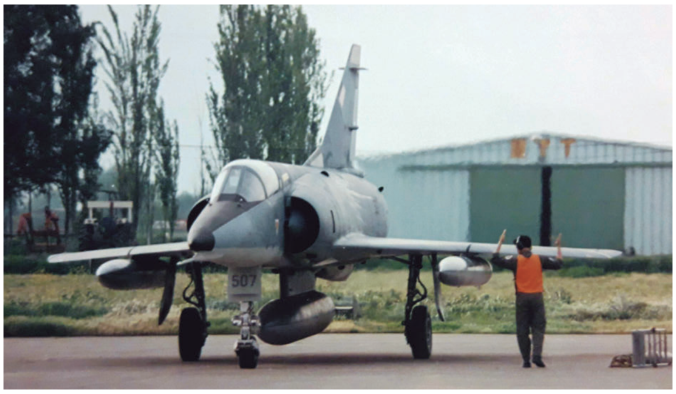
Mirage 50FC No. 507, flying over the Strait of Magellan, with the first air superiority painting camouflage. (Via Oscar Pereira)



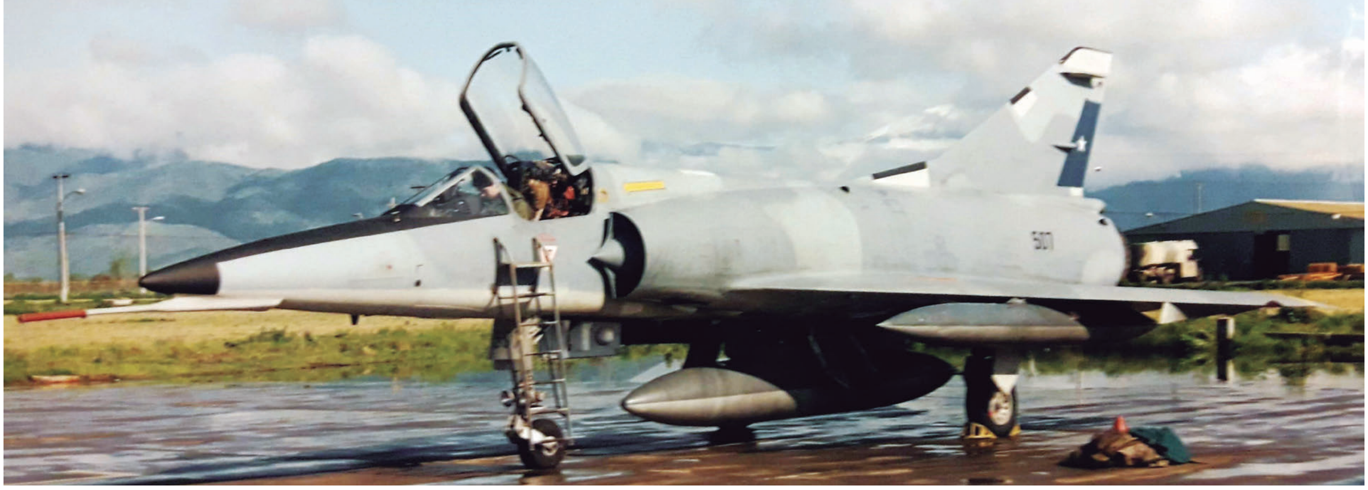
Mirage 50FC No. 507, flying in the Southern zone of Chile with its latest painting scheme. (Via Oscar Pereira)



Mirage 50FC No. 507 undergoing an post-flight inspection at Pudahuel Air Base. (Via Claudio Cáceres)



Mirage 50FC No. 507 being marshalled by its Crew Chief, at Los Cerrillos Air Base. (Claudio Cáceres)

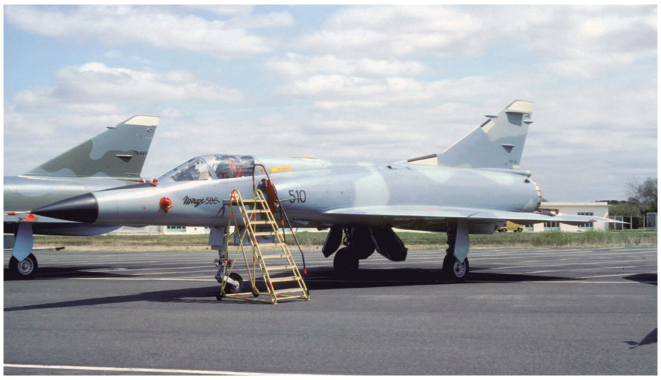


Mirage 50FC No. 507 sporting the latest painting scheme, a variation from the original. This scheme was used on March 11, 1993, the date on which this aircraft was lost. Fortunately, their pilot, captain Claudio Ibacache Escudero, was able to eject without injuries. (Patrick Laureau)

Mirages 50C/DC

Brand new Mirages

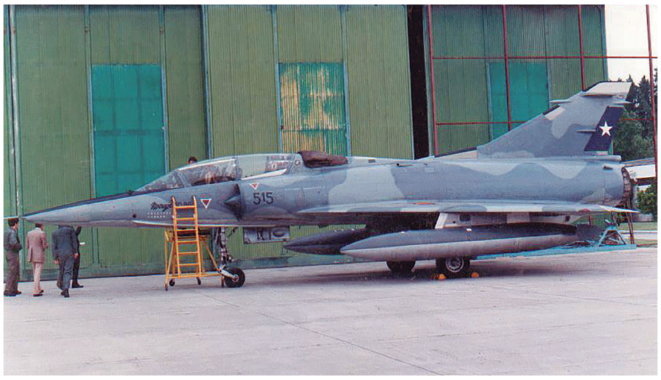
The contract with Marcel Dassault considered the acquisition of sixteen Mirage 50 variant. The first eight were delivered quickly, converting Mirage 5F from the Armée de l'Air with an average of 350 flight hours, practically new, although they had been stored for almost ten years. The remaining eight Mirages were new corresponding to six Mirage 50C and two Mirage 50DC trainer.



Mirage 50C No. 510 in Bordeaux, on April 15, 1982, before being disassembled and shipped to Chile. (Marcel Fluet)

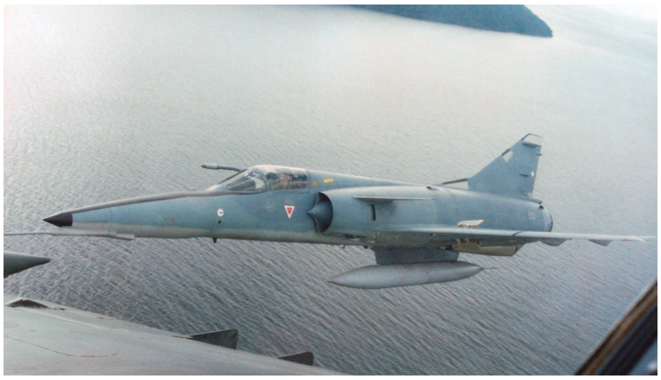
The most important feature included in these new Mirages was the air interception capability with their Agave radar, which differentiated them from the 50FC, by their stylized radome, moving the pitot tube to the center of the radar cover. They were also painted in the colors used by the Mirage 2000 aircraft, a combination of gray and blue, using the same pattern of spots as the Mirage 50FC.

The new Mirages began to arrive in 1982 and the last to arrive were the Mirage DC, at the beginning of 1983. However, its debut was not very promising, since at the end of that same year, the Mirage No. 516 crashed, product of a flame-out in the takeoff phase, which forces its pilots to eject. This Mirage would be replaced by a new Mirage 50DC as a warranty, which was delivered in January 1987.



Mirage 50DC No. 515 at Chabunco Air Base, April 1988. Note the white stars below of the variant name. (Via Dan Toro)

This Mirage platform was evaluated by IAI in 1985 to make the first modifications within what became known as the project "Bracket", and which led to the project "Pantera". In both projects, the Mirage 50C No. 514 was chosen for aerodynamic and electronic equipment testing. Therefore, the Mirage 50C planes were the first to enter the production line, with the No. 510 being the first to be delivered in 1991. By the mid-1990s, all Mirage 50Cs had been modified, except for No. 511, which crashed, killing its pilot.



Mirage 50C No. 513, converted to Mirage 50CN Pantera, forming with an A-37 from Aviation Group No. 12. (Patrick Laureau)

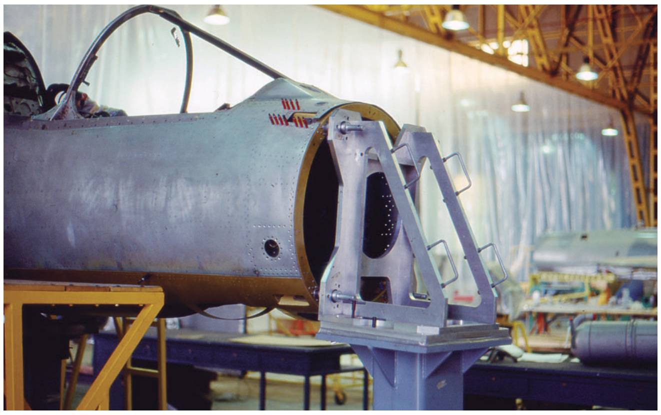
509

Mirage 50C

This Mirage was built in 1981 with the construction number 51 and was delivered in 1982 to the Chilean Air Force with the FACh number 509, being registered in Aviation Group No. 4 that same year.

In 1983, during an operational trip at the Chabunco Air Base, it landed without landing gear, under the controls of Commander León Dufey Treskow. Despite the characteristics of the accident, the Mirage did not suffer major damage and hydraulic specialists hoisted the Mirage using pneumatic floats and then managed to deploy the landing gear manually. Soon after, the Mirage was recovered and reintegrated into the operations of Aviation Group No. 4.

In March 1986 it was transferred to the Chabunco Air Base, Punta Arenas, a new settlement of Aviation Group No. 4. In 1987 it underwent the first major inspection at ENAER and at the end of it, it was commissioned in February 1988 to participate in the FIDA (International Air Fair) of that year, which was held at the El Bosque Air Base.



Mirage 50C No. 509 subjected to major inspection at ENAER, October 1988. (Via Dan Toro)

Mirage 50C No. 509 in the FIDAE 1988 flight line, where it made its flight presentations. (Via Dan Toro)

Mirage Pantera

In 1991 it was modified to Pantera, being delivered in early 1992 and presented at the FIDAE of that year at Los Cerrillos air base. In 1996 it would take part again in the FIDAE of that year and in 1998. In the early 2000s this Pantera was taken out of flight rotation along with the No. 512 and both Mirages were used as a source of spare parts for the rest of the Pantera fleet. The last chapter of this Mirage was its sale by award in a public auction as scrap, to the company Cometsur of Punta Arenas.

Mirage 50CN Pantera No. 509 in the FIDAE 1992 flight line. (Rino Poletti collection)

Mirage 50C

This Mirage was built in 1981 with the construction number 52 and was delivered in 1982 to the Chilean Air Force with the FACh number 510. It was assigned to Aviation Group No. 4 that same year.

In March 1986 it was transferred to the Chabunco Air Base, Punta Arenas, a new settlement of Aviation Group No. 4.

510
CB-500-K
CB-250-K
NORTHROP F-5E

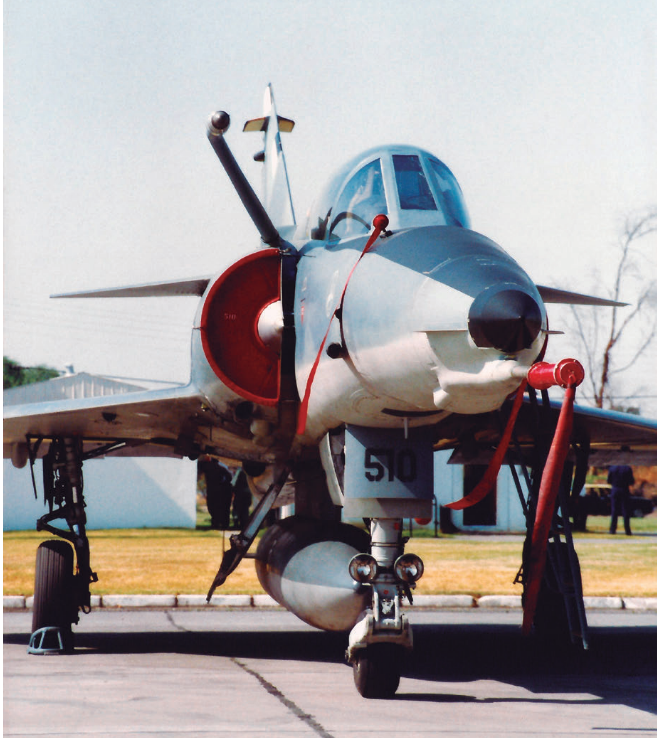
Mirage 50C No. 510 on static display at FIDA 1986 at El Bosque Air Base. (Antonio Segovia)

510
Mirage 50C

Mirage 50C No. 510 operating at Chabunco Air Base alongside the Mirage 50FC. (Chilean Air Force)

Mirage Pantera

In the early 1990s it was subjected to the modifications of the project Pantera, being the first production Pantera delivered in 1991 and being presented at FIDAE 1992 at the Cerrillos Air Base. The year 2000 was presented at the FIDAE of that year at Los Cerrillos Air Base. This Pantera continued operating with the rest of the fleet until December 28, 2007, the date of the farewell of these supersonic Deltas of the Chilean Air Force. After its deactivation it was stored in the Supply Wing, El Bosque Air Base. Later it was donated to the School of Specialties, where it is used for instructional purposes.



Mirage 50CN Pantera No. 510 in the flight line of Aviation Group No. 10, Pudahuel Air Base. (Rino Poletti collection)

511

Mirage 50C

This Mirage was built in 1981 with the construction number 53 and was delivered in 1982 to the Chilean Air Force with the FACh number 511. It was assigned to the Aviation Group No. 4 that same year.

It was officially one of the most photographed Mirages and appeared in several national publications, showing its attractive colors of its air superiority painting camouflage scheme.

Mirage No. 511 was one of the aircraft used to make the homologation of Cardoen cluster bombs. Some of the still photographs in which it appears with CB-250-K bombs, its identification was censored.

In March 1986 it was transferred to the Chabunco Air Base, Punta Arenas, a new settlement of Aviation Group No. 4. In 1987 it underwent its first major inspection at ENAER. and at the end of it, it was commissioned in February 1988 to participate in FIDA of that year, which was also held at the El Bosque Air Base.

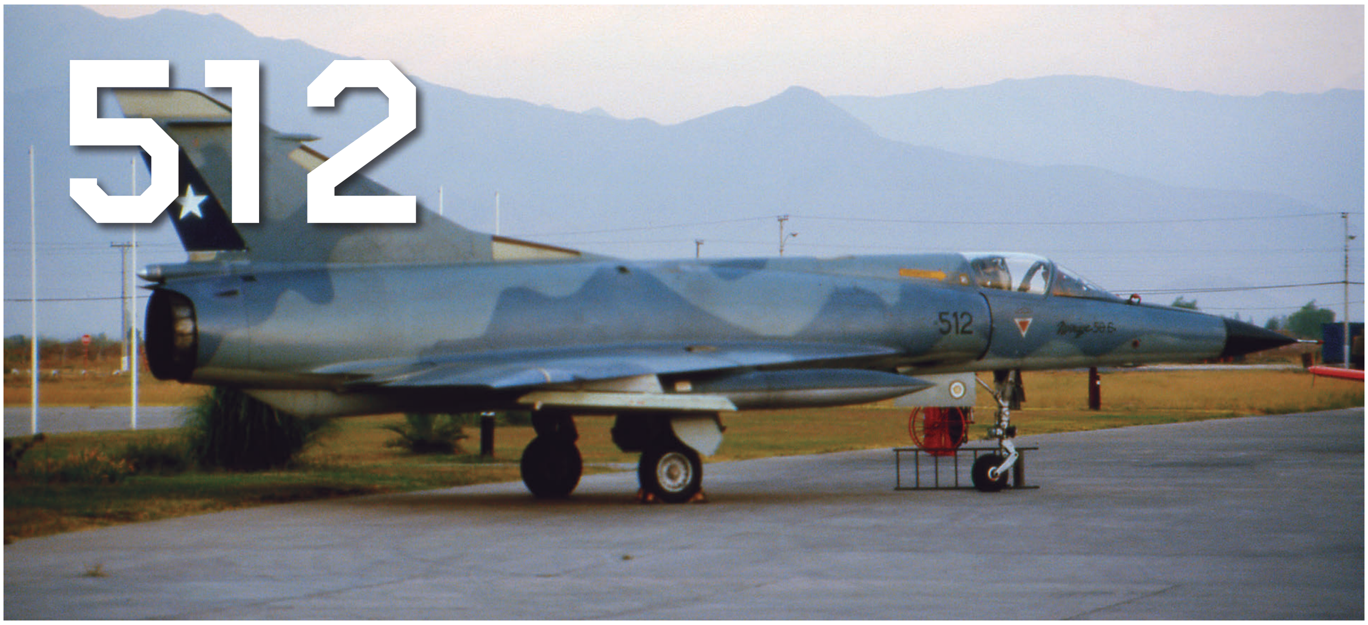
Mirage 50C No. 511, performing tests of launching cluster bombs in the shooting range of Iquique, 1987. (Rino Poletti collection)

Accident

The year 1989 is frenetic and full of flight activities for the Aviation Group No.4, so extraordinary activities were scheduled for Saturday, June 18. The first flights were scheduled first thing in the early morning or "baker flights" as pilots were colloquially called. The element formed by the captains Sergio Rojas Ávila and Jorge Uzcategui Fortín was the first to take off, however Mirage No. 511 with captain Rojas t the stick experienced an explosion in its engine and the pilot managed to eject, but in an attitude that made the seat impacted with the terrain, not giving opportunity to its pilot to deploy his parachute, dying on the spot. Meanwhile, Captain Uzcategui managed to evade the explosion of the 511 at command of the 509 and then landed, verifying that his plane was not damaged.

Thus, this was the only fatal accident that mourned Aviation Group No. 4 and especially the brother of the deceased pilot, also a pilot from Aviation Group No. 4, Commander Jorge Rojas Ávila, who would later become Commander in Chief of the Chilean Air Force in 2010.

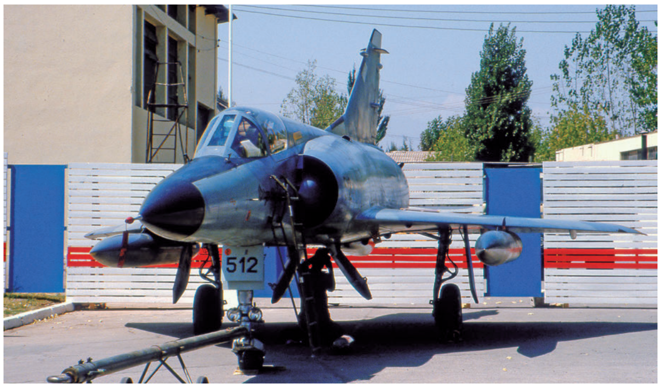
Remains of the left intake engine of the Mirage 50C No 511, which crashed on June 18, 1989, and claimed the life of Captain Sergio Rojas Ávila (rip). (Rino Poletti collection)



Mirage 50C

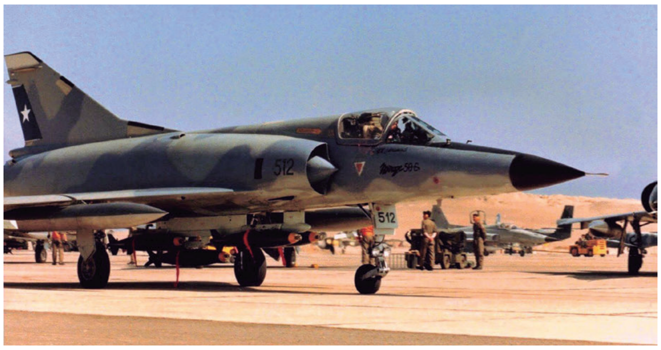
This Mirage was built in 1981 with the construction number 54 and was delivered in 1982 to the Chilean Air Force with the No. FACh 510. It was assigned to the Aviation Group No. 4 that same year.

This Mirage participated in FIDA 1984, being the first Mirage 50C aircraft to be publicly presented. In March 1986 it was transferred to the Chabunco Air Base, Punta Arenas, a new settlement of Aviation Group No. 4.



Mirage 50C No. 512, ready to be towed to its place of presentation at FIDA 1984. (Via Javier Muñoz)

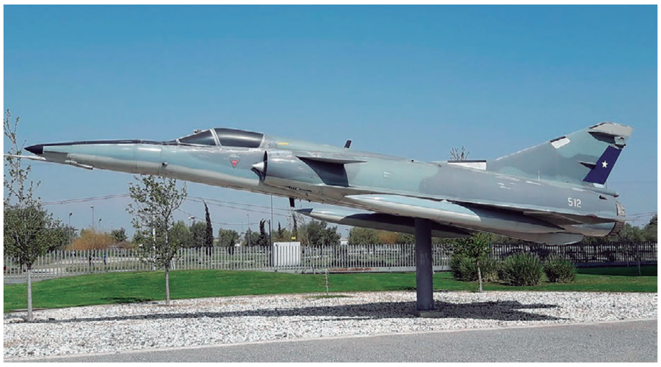
Flight line of Aviation Group No. 4 in February 1986, before the transfer to Punta Arenas. Mirage 50C No. 512 is observed. (Via Javier Muñoz)



Mirage 50C No. 512 loaded with 5 live bombs on the central pylon, during an exercise in the North zone. (Raúl Zamora collection)

Mirage Pantera

At the beginning of the 1990s it was subjected to the modifications of the project Pantera, being delivered in the middle of that decade. In October 2004 it took part in the Salitre 2004 exercise. Later it was removed from the flight rotative and was used as a source of spare parts for the rest of the fleet, along with Panther No. 509. It was temporarily stored in the Supply Wing, El Bosque Air Base and was later donated to the National Aeronautical and Space Museum of Chile to be restored and placed as monument in the FACh corporate building, at Cerrillos Air Base.



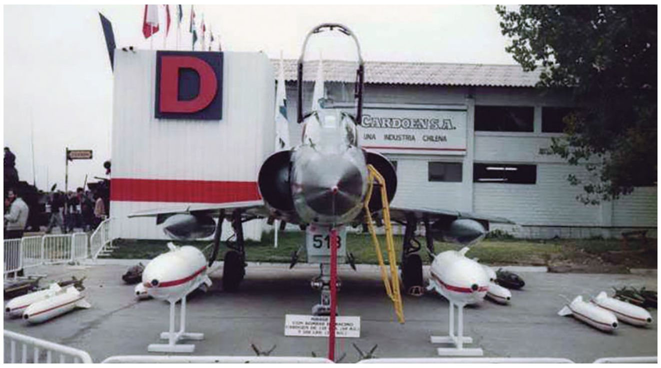
Final destination of Mirage Pantera 50CN No. 512, as a monument in the corporate building of the Chilean Air Force. (Julio Arróspide)

513

Mirage 50C

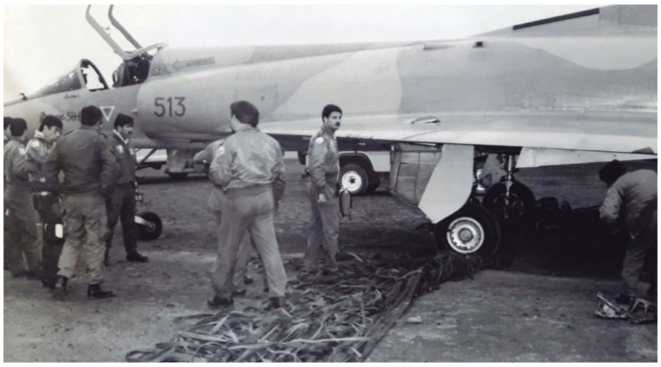
This Mirage was built in 1981 with the construction number 55 and was delivered in 1982 to the Chilean Air Force with the FACh number 513. It was assigned to the Aviation Group No. 4 that same year.

In March 1986 it was transferred to the Chabunco Air Base, Punta Arenas, a new settlement of Aviation Group No. 4.



Mirage 50C No. 513 displayed as a platform for Cardoen cluster bombs. (Rino Poletti collection)

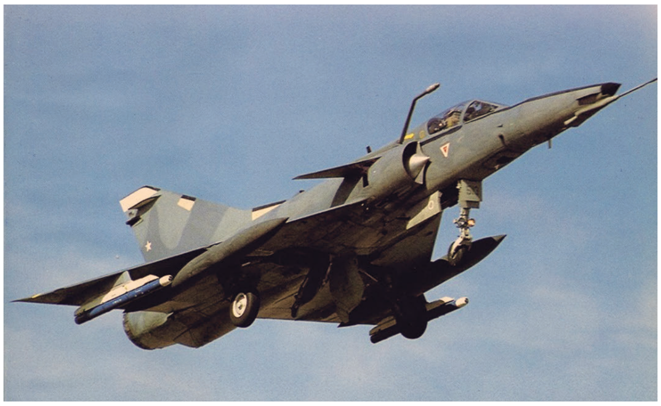
Mirage 50CN No. 513 operating in its new settlement at Chabunco Air Base, 1986. (Rino Poletti collection)



Emergency landing of Mirage 50C No. 513 on July 14, 1988. The containment net barrier accomplished its purpose. (Rino Poletti collection)

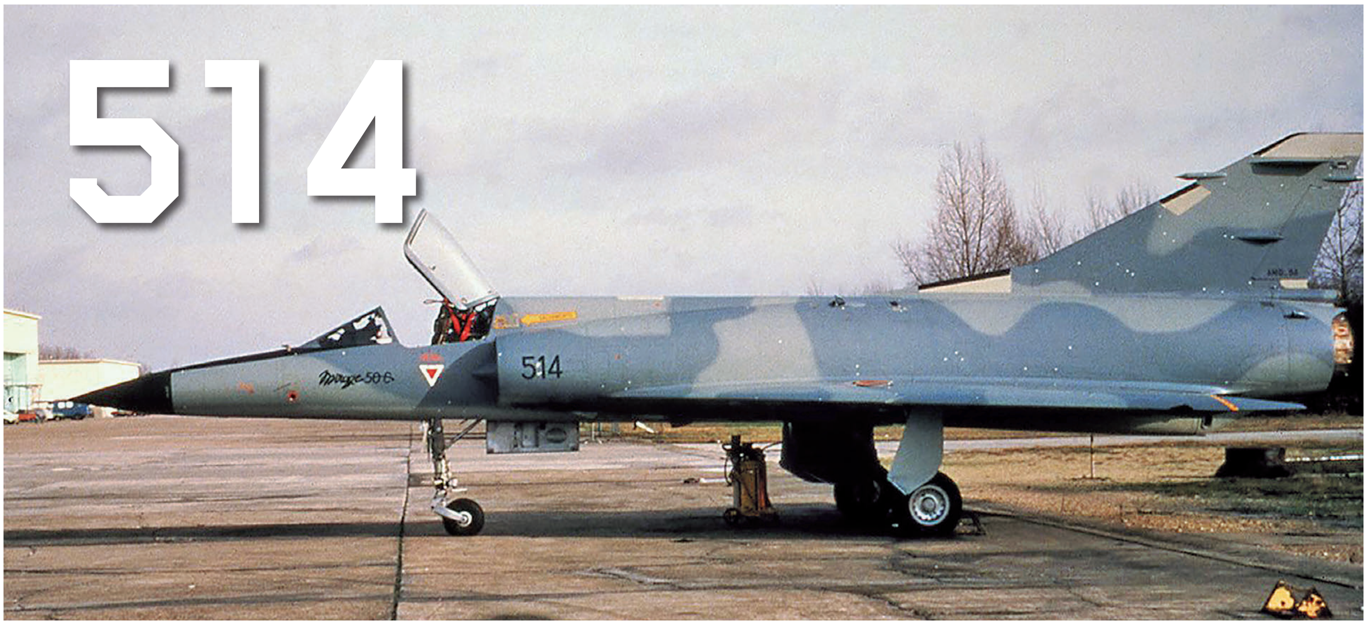
Mirage Pantera

At the beginning of the 1990s it was submitted to the modifications of the project Pantera, being delivered at the beginning of 1994, an occasion that was used to be presented at the FIDAE of that year at Los Cerrillos Air Base. This Mirage continued to operate with the rest of the fleet until December 28, 2007, the date of the farewell of these supersonic Deltas of the Chilean Air Force. It is currently located as a monument in the city of Punta Arenas.



Mirage Pantera 50CN No. 513 landing after a training mission in 1998. (Chilean Air Force)

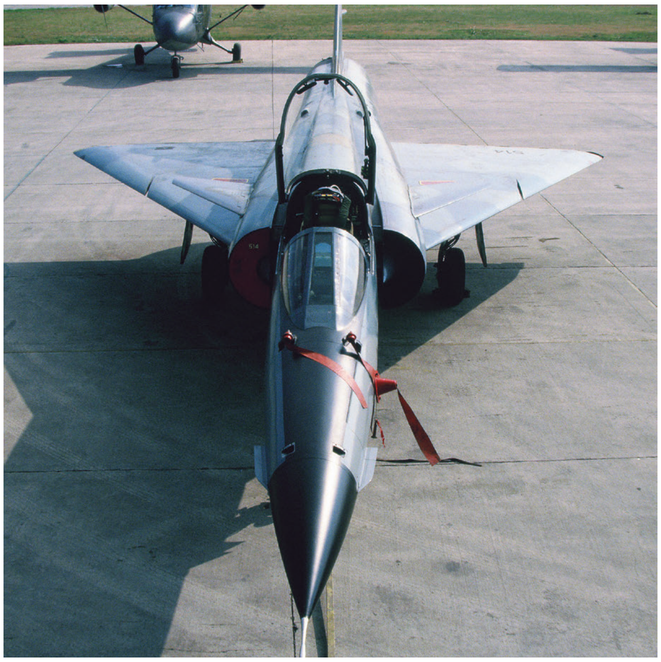
514



Mirage 50C

This Mirage was built in 1981 with the construction number 56 and was delivered in 1982 to the Chilean Air Force with the FACh number 514. It was assigned to the Aviation Group No. 4 that same year.

In 1985 it was selected to conduct the aerodynamic tests of the project Bracket, developed by IAI in conjunction with the newly created ENAER. The modifications consisted mainly of the aggregation of vortex-generating fillets in the nose cone, immediately following the radome and Canards fins behind the engine intakes. The tests were successful, and the Mirage was presented at FIDA 1986 with this new configuration. Subsequently, this Mirage became the prototype of the new project Pantera.



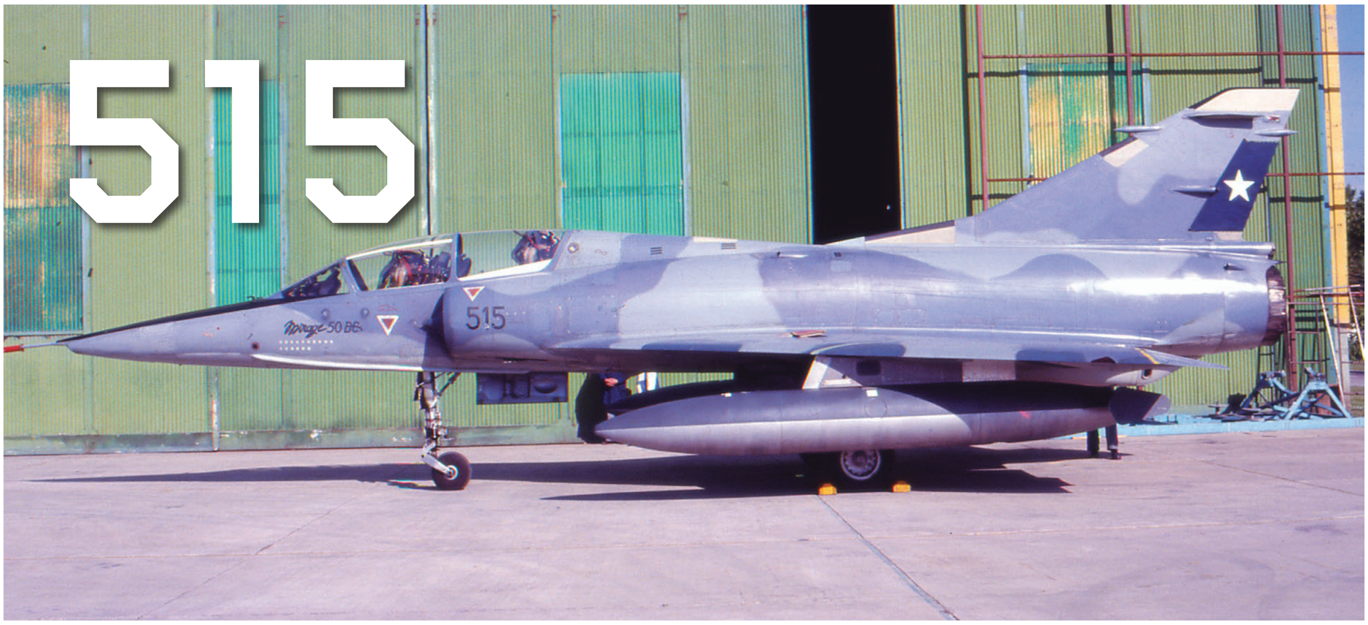
Mirage 50C No. 514, showing the modifications of the project Bracket in 1986. (Raúl Zamora collection)

Mirage Pantera

At the end of 1986, extensive work began on the structural and electronic equipment modifications to this Mirage, which were completed in mid-1988. The new Mirage received the designation 50CN Pantera and was officially unveiled on October 14 of that year. While the Panteras began production line in the late 1980s, this Mirage continued to perform its role as a project test plane, homologating new electronic equipment and weapon systems. Thus, in 1993 it launched two Python 3 missiles at the Los Cóndores Air Base under the command of Commander Baeza. In the middle of that decade, the aircraft was returned to Aviation Group No. 4 and in 1996 participated in the FIDAE of that year. The last outstanding action of this aircraft was the participation in the CRUZEX 2002 exercise, in the city of Natal in Brazil. It is currently stored in the Supply Wing, El Bosque Air Base, waiting to be sold as a source of spare parts for some of the few Air Forces that still operate Mirage 5/50.

The Mirage 50CN Pantera No. 514, during its transfer to the city of Natal in Brazil to take part in CRUZEX 2002. (Rino Poletti collection)

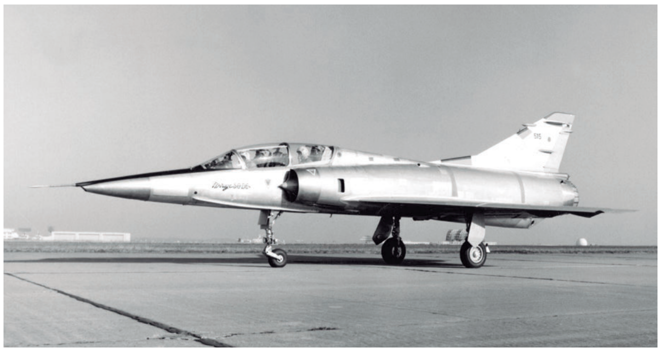
515



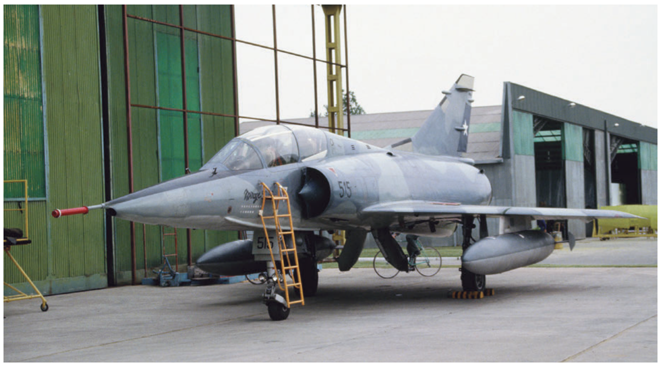
Mirage 50DC

This Mirage was built in 1982 with the construction number 57 and was delivered in 1983 to the Chilean Air Force with the FACh number 515. It was assigned to the Aviation Group No. 4 on May 28 of that same year. From 1984 to 1987 it carried the weight of instruction and training of the pilots of Aviation Group No. 4, due to the loss of the No. 516.

In March 1986 it was transferred to the Chabunco Air Base, Punta Arenas, a new settlement of Aviation Group No. 4.



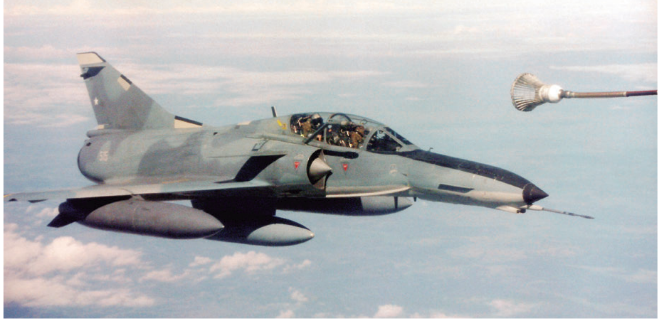
Mirage 50DC No. 515, taxiing in Brétigny, France, on January 18, 1982, without its paint scheme. (Dassault)



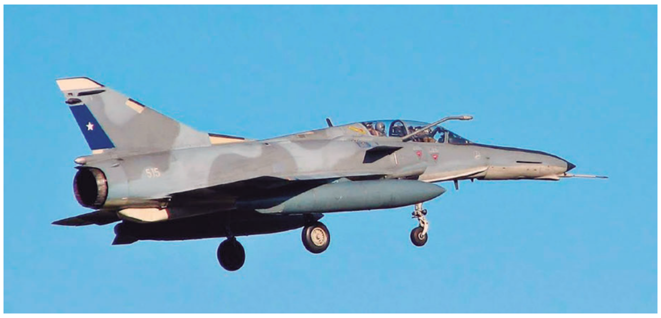
Mirage 50DCN Pantera No. 515, at Chabunco Air Base, April 1988. The stars under the cockpit indicate the number of pilots trained on the plane. (Rino Poletti Collection)

Mirage Pantera

In the mid-1990s it was subjected to the modifications of the project Pantera, being delivered at the end of that decade. In 2002 it took part in the CRUZEX exercise in Natal, Brazil. This Mirage continued operating with the rest of the fleet until December 28, 2007, the date of the farewell of these supersonic Deltas of the Chilean Air Force. On January 4, 2008, it made its last flight in a auto-transfer to Santiago, under the command of Commander Toledo and Master Sergeant Martínez as co-pilot. This Mirage was delivered on loan by the FACh to the National Aeronautical and Space Museum, where unfortunately it was repainted with an incorrect scheme.



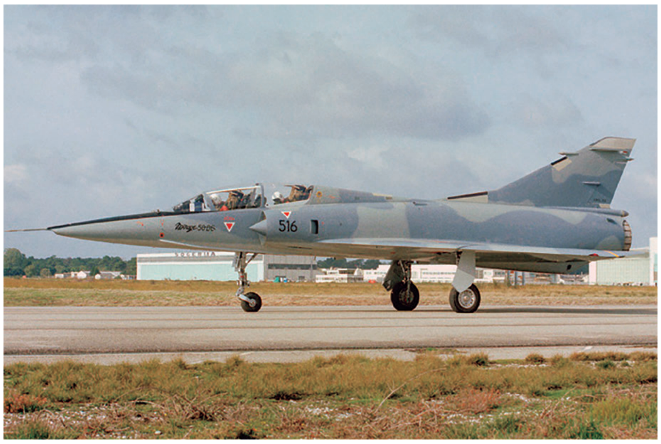
Mirage 50DCN Pantera No. 515, being refueled on a flight en route to Brazil to take part in CRUZEX 2002. (Rino Poletti collection)



Mirage 50DCN Pantera No. 515, in its last formation for the Military Parade, September 2007. (Luis Quintana)

Mirage 50DC

This Mirage was built in 1982 with the construction number 58 and was delivered in 1983 to the Chilean Air Force with the FACh number 516. It was assigned to the Aviation Group No. 4 on November 24 of that same year.



Mirage 50DC No. 516 performing acceptance flights in France, before being delivered to the FACh. It can be seen that he does not yet have painted the white star on the rudder. (Dassault)

Accident

After a few hours of flight, Mirage 50DC No. 516 performed its last instructional sortie. It was December 29, 1983, and the plane was scheduled for a flight for the instructor course of captain Cristian Bakx H., who was in the back seat and his instructor, captain Osvaldo Sarabia V., who was in the front seat. During takeoff there was an engine shutdown and the plane, although it had already reached a certain height, was doomed, since with that height it was not possible to apply the engine re-ignition procedure, so the decision did not take long and both pilots ejected, saving their lives, suffering minor injuries.

The effect of the loss of the 516 produced several events that were not contemplated. The first was a leak of information about the accident. In a period when any leakage of information about the status of the Chilean Air Force assets could be collected by the intelligence services of neighboring countries, therefore this leakage of information was not tolerated, and the person involved was discharged from the Institution. Another and most important effect, Aviation Group No. 4 was left with only one trainer Mirage, which would affect the Operational Pace of the Group and the preparation and training of pilots for a prolonged period of time.

The first Mirage 50DC No. 516, which was lost due to a flame-out. (Rino Poletti Collection)

Investigation

After the accident, an investigative commission was constituted, in which Dassault participated, which determined that the engine shutdown was due to lack of fuel. However, no failure in the fueling system could be verified and the only possibility was that in the rear cockpit the pilot inadvertently triggered the engine cut switch with his sleeve during the engine cruise-power maneuver. This thesis allowed the Chilean Air Force to dispute the replacement of the aircraft by technical guarantee, due to a design flaw of the position of the switch and the lack of an adequate protection.

Replacement

The investigation and legal dispute dragged on for several years and eventually Dassault agreed to hand over a new plane for warranty. The switch was repositioned and covered by a bowl to prevent unintentional actuation. Finally, a delegation of Officers and Non-Commissioned Officers of Aviation Group No. 4 was commissioned in January 1987 to France, to receive the new Mirage 50DC No. 516, serial number 3F/1VA, which was dismantled and transferred to Chile, directly to Punta Arenas.

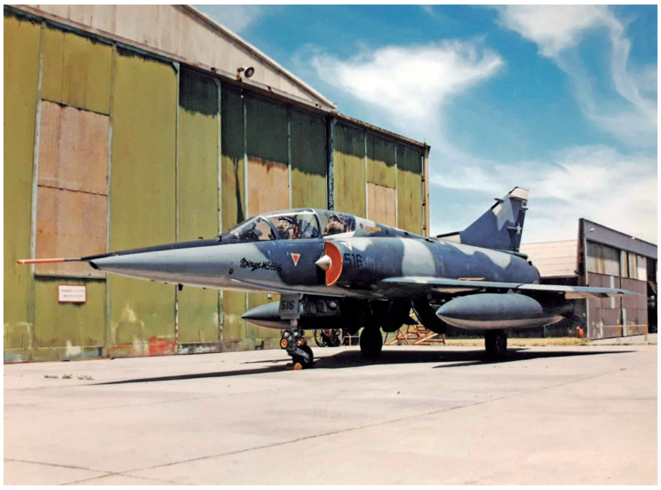
Deja Vu...

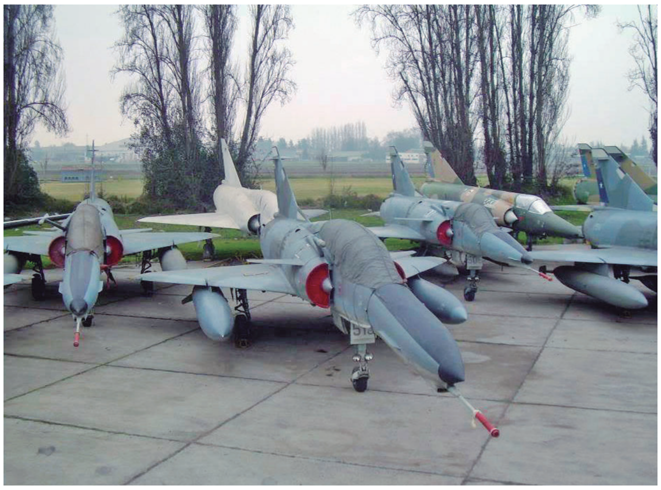
Once the new Mirage arrived at Chabunco Air Base, specialists from Aviation Group No. 4 proceeded to reassemble the new aircraft without the assistance of Dassault technicians. The test flight, however, almost ended in tragedy. Minutes after takeoff, the engine surprisingly flamed out. The skill and courage of its pilot allowed him in extreme conditions, to re-light the engine and land the elusive plane safely.

After this incident, the plane was grounded for a year, managing to determine a failure in the fuel pump of its new engine. The engine was changed, and No. 516 began to operate normally in its instruction and training roles, along with the Mirage No. 515. On the other hand, Dassault had to replace a new engine, also for a warranty issue.

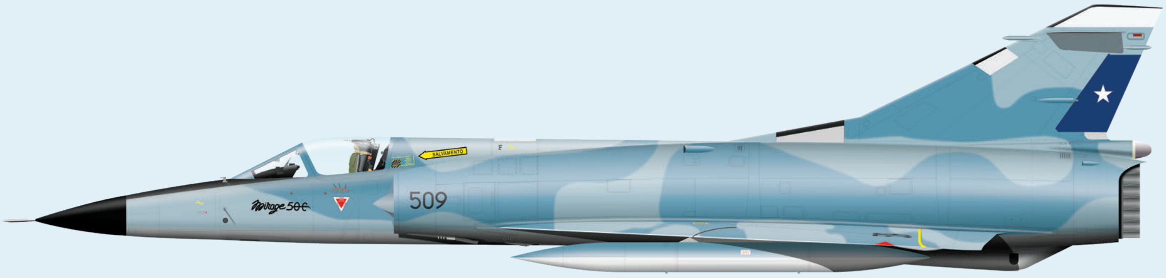
Mirage Pantera

Like the rest of the fleet, this Mirage was converted to the Pantera standard in the late 1990s. In October 2004, it took part in the Salitre exercise, developed in the 1st and 5th Air Brigades. It continued flying in the Aviation Group No. 4 until the end of its operational life in 2007. Together with the Mirage Pantera No. 515 they managed to prepare 116 fighter pilots during 27 years of service. It is currently preserved in the Supply Wing, El Bosque Air Base, waiting to be sold along with the rest of Mirage Pantera and Mirage Elkan.

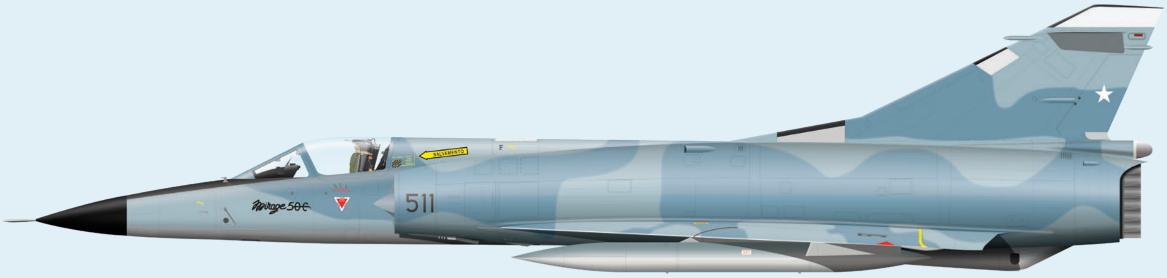

The new Mirage 50DC No. 516, at Chabunco Air Base. It can be seen that the pattern and paint tones were different from the original aircraft. (Rino Poletti Collection)


Provisional destination of the Mirage Pantera No. 516, along with other Mirage Elkan, awaiting an eventual buyer as a source of spare parts. (Issan Valenzuela)

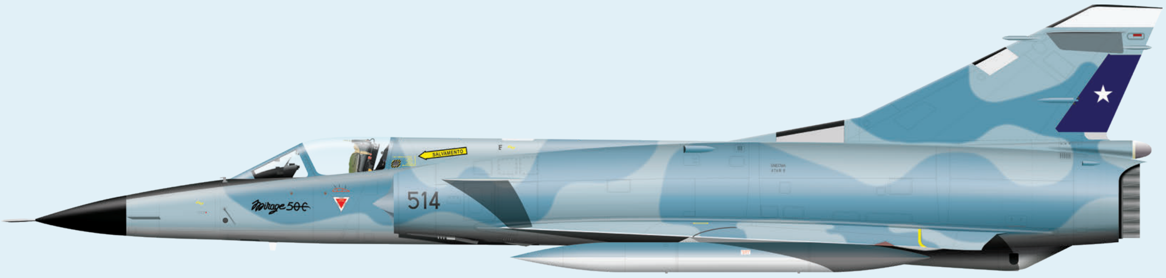
Mirage 50C, No. 51, No. FACh 509, Aviation Group No. 4, Chilean Air Force, Pudahuel Air Base, Santiago, 1984.


Mirage 50C
SALVAMENTO
509

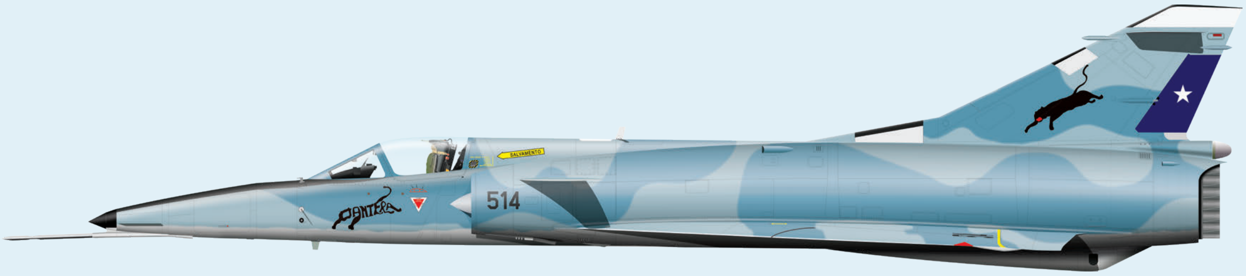
Mirage 50C, No. 53, No. FACh 511, Aviation Group No. 4, Chilean Air Force, Chabunco Air Base, Punta Arenas, 1988.


Mirage 50C
SALVAMENTO
511

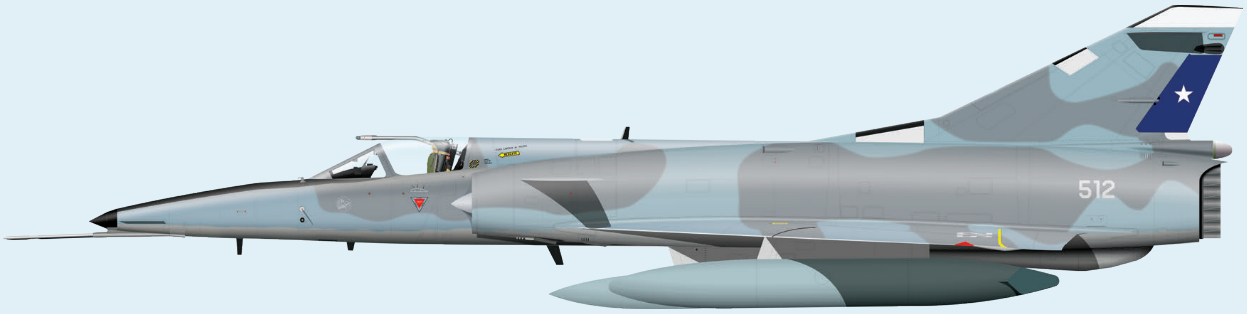
Mirage 50C, No. 56, No. FACh 514, Bracket prototype, ENAER, El Bosque Air Base, Santiago, 1986.


Mirage 50C
SALVAMENTO
514

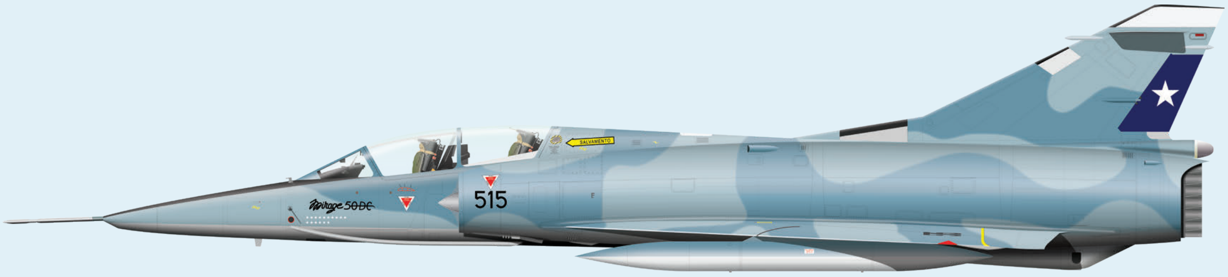
Mirage 50CN, No. 56, No. FACh 514, Pantera prototype, ENAER, El Bosque Air Base, Santiago, 1988.


Pantera
SALVAMENTO
514

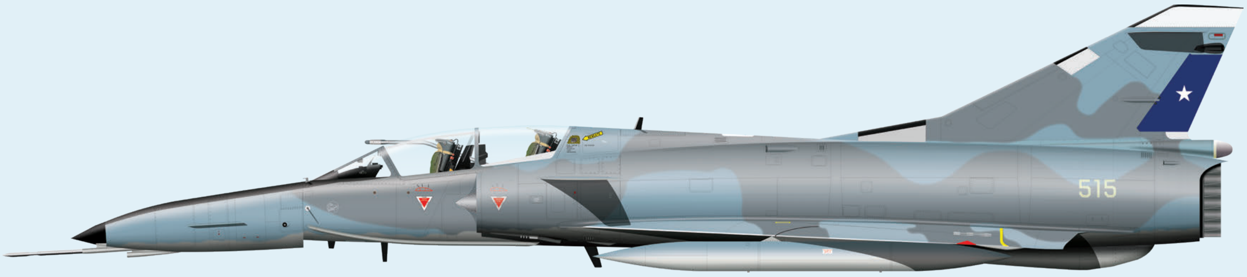
Mirage 50CN, No. 54, No. FACh 512, Aviation Group No. 4, Chilean Air Force, Chabunco Air Base, Punta Arenas, 2007.



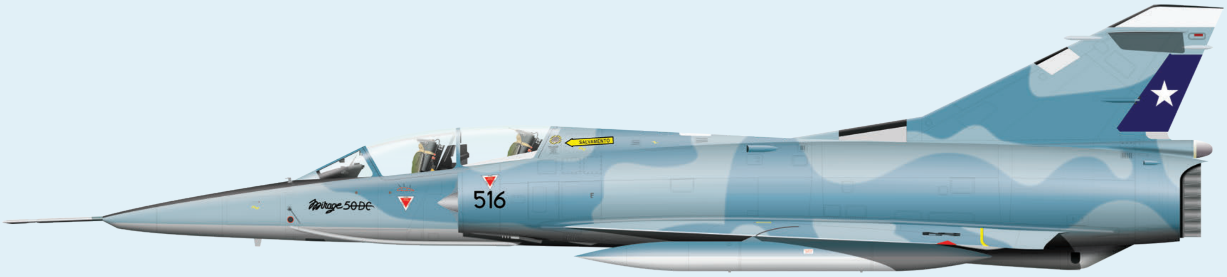
Mirage 50DC, No. 57, No. FACh 515, Aviation Group No. 4, Chilean Air Force, Pudahuel Air Base, Santiago, 1986.


Mirage 50DC
515
SALVAMENTO

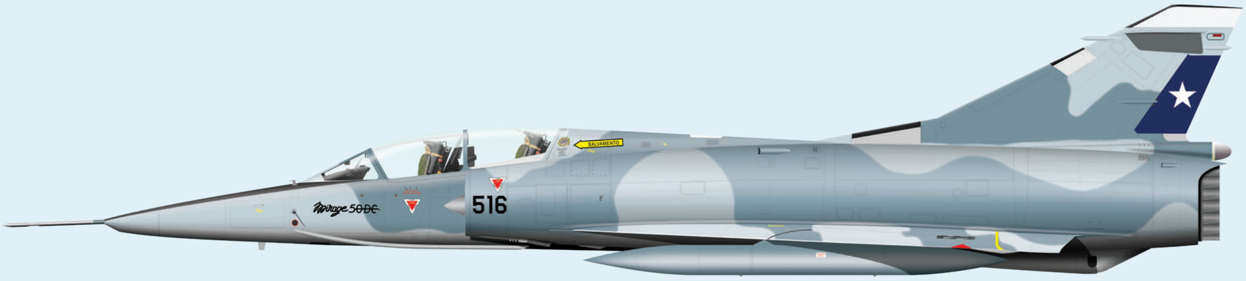
Mirage 50DCN, No. 57, No. FACh 515, Aviation Group No. 4, Chilean Air Force, El Bosque Air Base, Santiago, 2008.



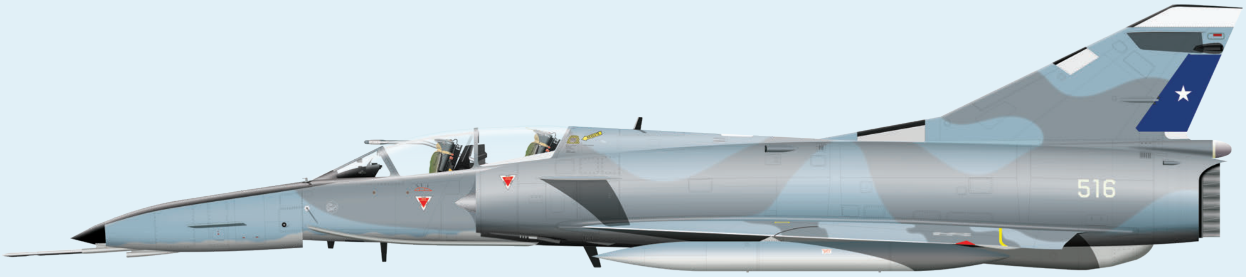
Mirage 50DC, No. 58, No. FACh 516, Aviation Group No. 4, Chilean Air Force, Pudahuel Air Base, Santiago, 1983.


Mirage 50DC
516
SALVAMENTO

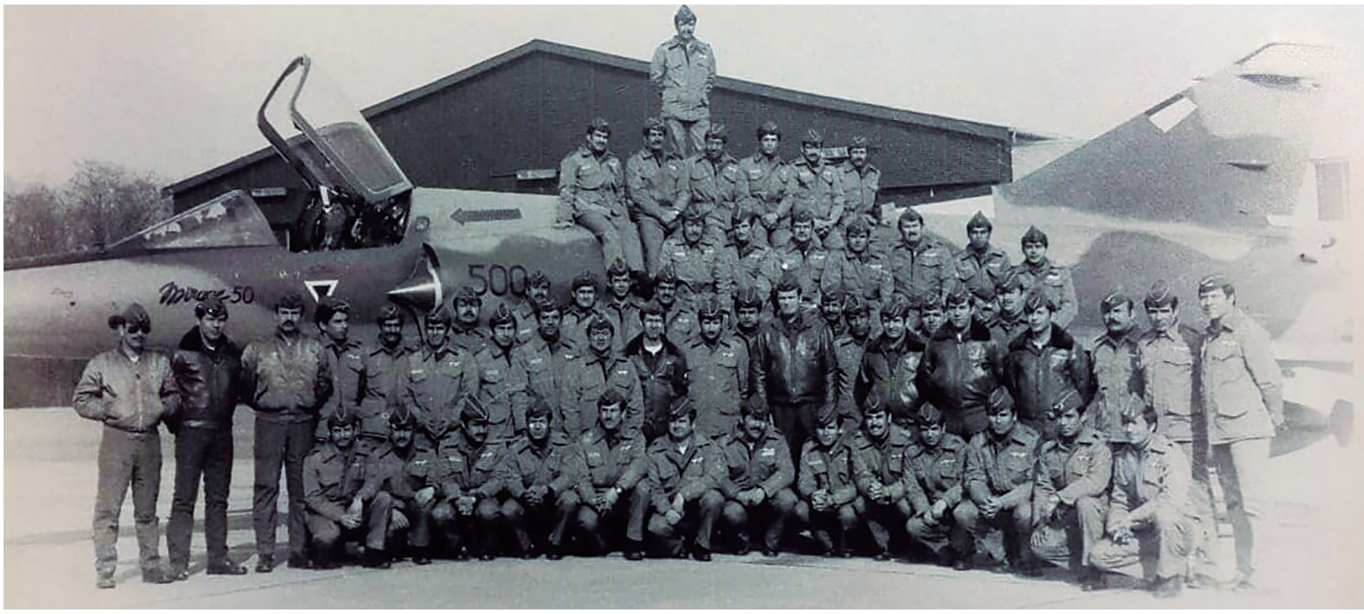
Mirage 50DC, No. 3F/1VA, No. 516, Aviation Group No. 4, Chilean Air Force, Chabunco Air Base, Punta Arenas, 1987.


Mirage 50DC
516
SALVAMENTO

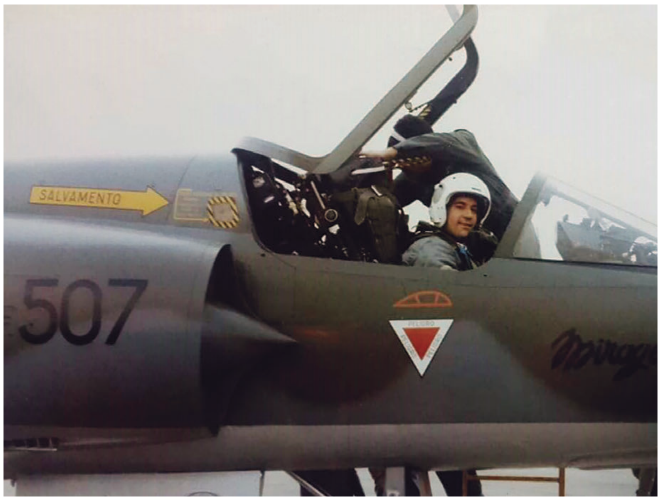
Mirage 50CN Pantera, No. 3F/1VA, No. 516, Aviation Group No. 4, Chilean Air Force, Chabunco Air Base, Punta Arenas, 2006.



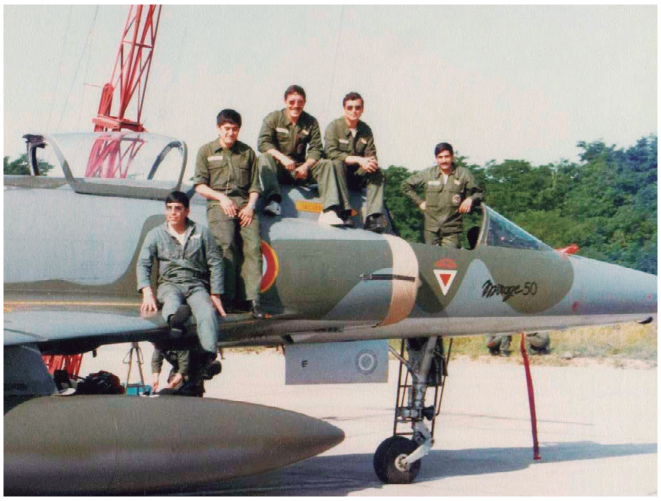
Pilots and Ground Crew



First group of Chilean pilots, mechanics, and specialists of Aviation Group No. 4, in France, March 1980. They pose on the Mirage 50 No. 500 aircraft, which does not have yet the FC suffix, or the white star painted on the rudder. (Via Anton Bakx)



Chilean Air Force captain Cristian Bakx H., making an acceptance flight of Mirage No. 507. Captain Bakx became the fifth Chilean Air Force pilot (Mach No. 5) to conduct a flight course in Mirage plane. (Via Anton Bakx)



Chilean specialists dismantling the ejection seat of one of the Chilean Mirage 50: Enrique Aguirre (rip), Abelardo Villalobos, Jorge Sandoval, Víctor Vergara, and Alfredo Larraín. (Via Julio Arróspide)

First Chilean Air Force pilot officers to take the flight course in Mirage 50 material, pose in front of the Mirage 50 No. 500. (Via Anton Bakx)

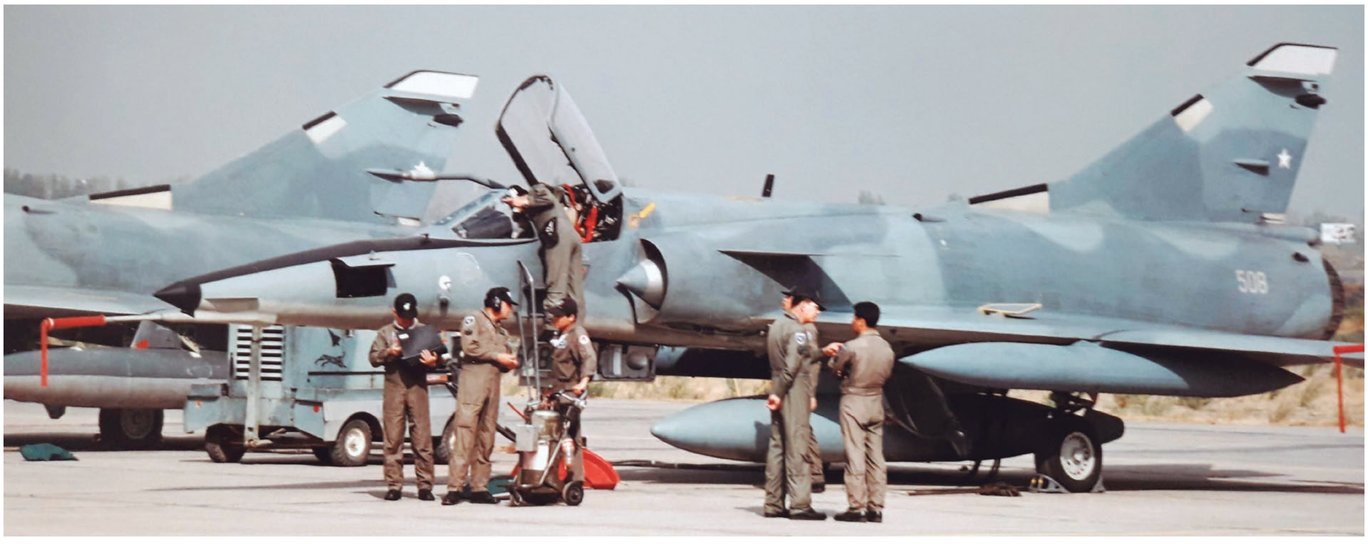
Captain Michael Lambie, one of the first Chilean Air Force pilots trained in France. (Via Marcia Andreuzzi)

Pilots of Aviation Group No. 4 in front of the Mirage 50FC and 50C line of aircraft, circa 1983. Some Mi-rage 50FC are observed sporting the Group's emblem in red with a white border. (Via Anton Bakx)

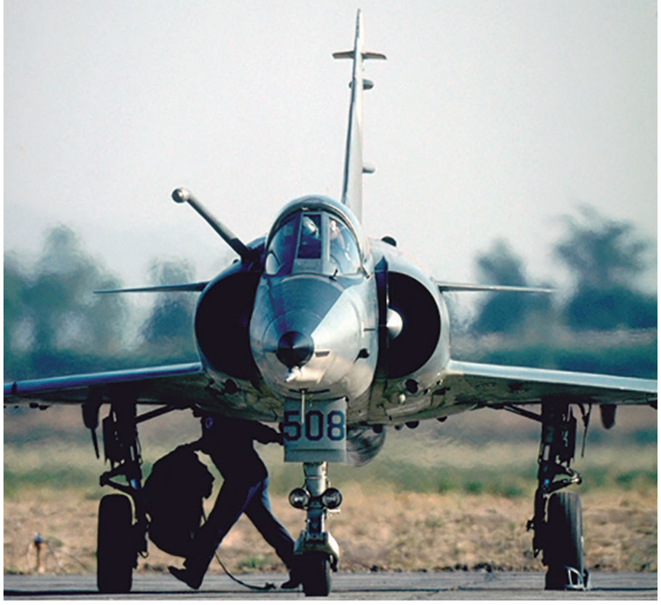
Pilots of Aviation Group No. 4 posing in front of the Mirage 50FC and 50C line of aircraft, circa 1984. One of those pilots, Captain Osvaldo Sarabia Vilches, will become Commander-in-Chief of the Chilean Air Force in 2002. (Via Anton Bakx)

Pilots and mechanics of Aviation Group No. 4 pose in front of the Mirage 50FC line of aircraft on the tarmac of Cerro Moreno Air Base in 1981, during the first displacement of the unit to the northern part of the country. (Via Julio Arróspide)

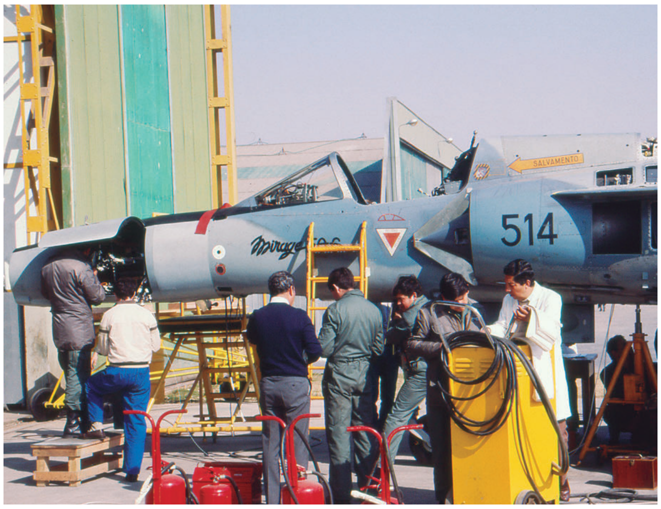
Maintenance and support specialists from Aviation Group No. 4 pose in Delta formation, in front of a Mirage 50FC, during its first trip to Cerro Moreno Air Base in 1981. On the right side you can see part of the fuselage of a de Havilland Vampire. (Via Julio Arróspide)



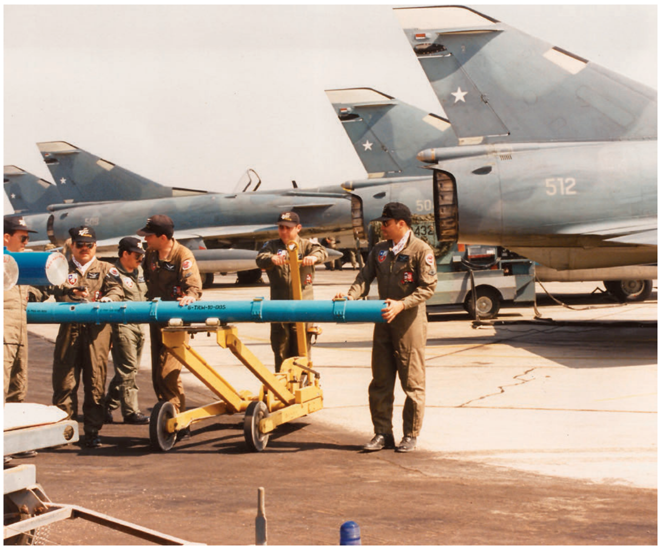
Line mechanics and support specialists perform the post-flight inspection of the Mirage Pantera No. 508 upon arrival of a transfer, configured with a 1,300-liter ventral fuel tank and two 500-liter super-sonic tanks. (Rino Poletti collection)



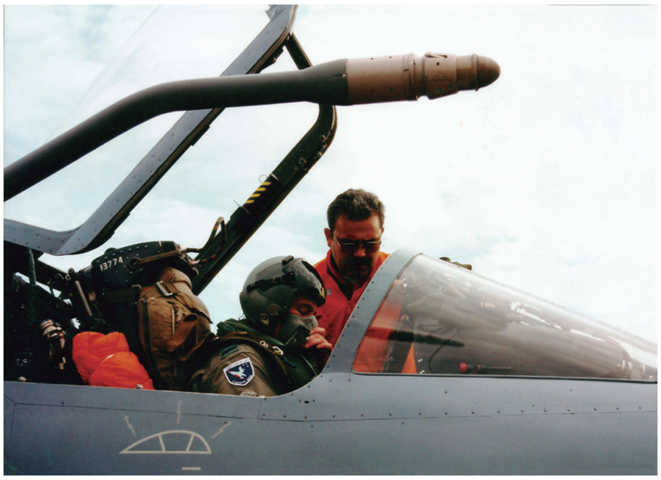
A mechanic performs the last checks before a flight demonstration of the Mirage 50CN No 508 at FIDAE 2000. (Alessandro Bocca collection)



ENAER's team of technicians and specialists working on the Mirage 50CN, prototype of the Pantera project, in July 1988, before its official presentation in August of that year. (Mario Magliochetti)



Armores and mechanics of Aviation Group No. 4 moving a Python 3 practice missile, during the "Cy-clone 1996" exercise, held at Cerro Moreno Air Base. (Rino Poletti collection)



Crew Chief Sgt. Octavio Martinez assists the pilot during the cockpit check, before starting a training sortie on Mirage Pantera No. 514. (Rino Poletti collection)

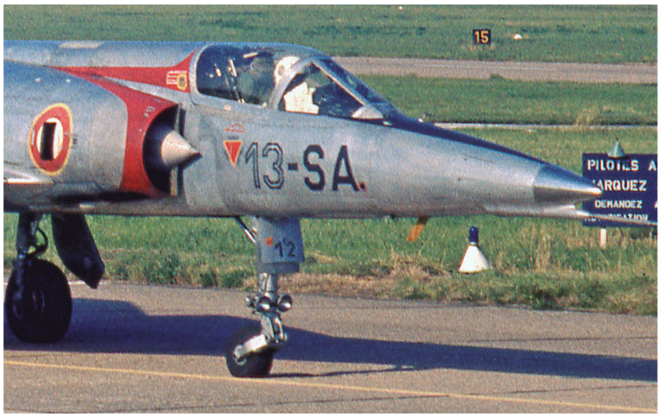
Mach No. 116 pilot, the last pilot to receive training in the Mirage Pantera System, Lieutenant Jorge Ramos, who joined the Aviation Group No. 4 after the deactivation of the Elkans in 2006, where he was also an operational pilot of that combat aircraft. (Via Jorge Ramos)

The last flight of the Mirage Panteras No. 504 and No. 515, on January 4, 2008, in their transfer to Santiago. Their crew poses for such an important event: Commander Arnoldo Toledo, Master Sargent Octavio Martínez and Commander Francisco Pizarro. (Via Octavio Martínez)

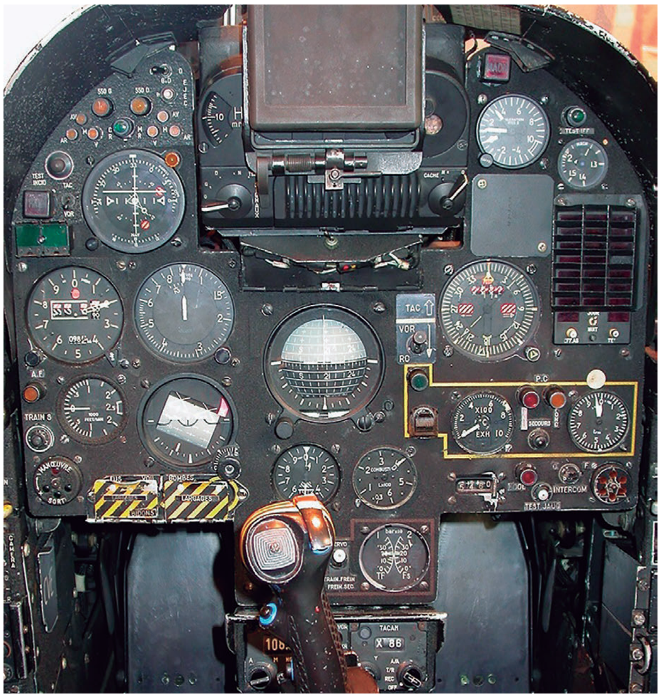
Walkaround

515
PELIGRO
E

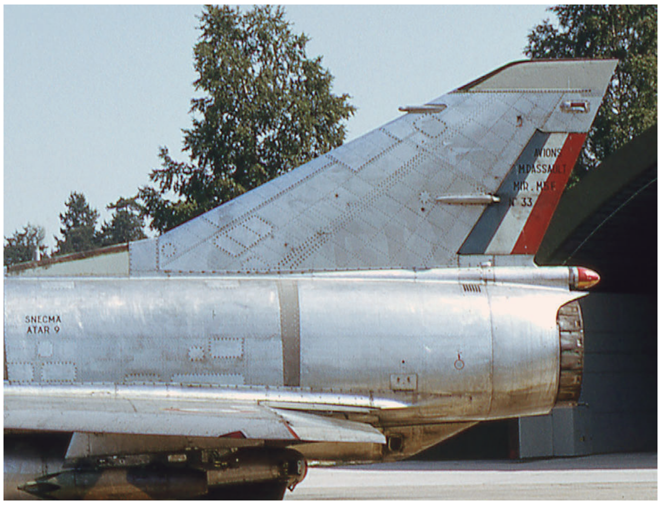
Mirage 5F



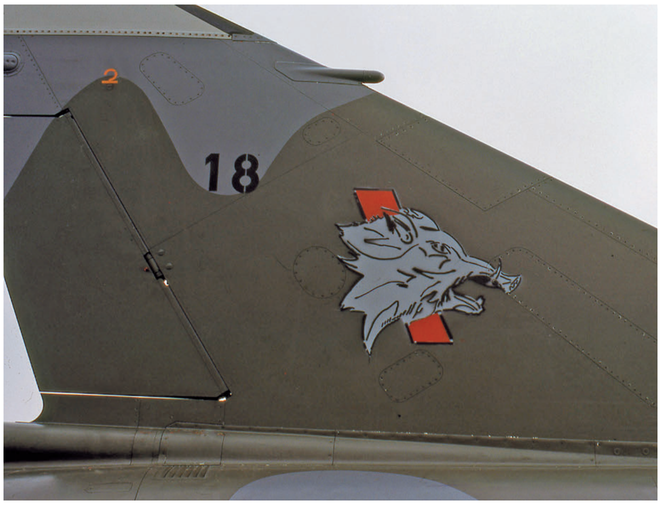
Details of the forward fuselage of the Mirage 5F, No. 12, of 3/13 Auvergne Squadron, 1974, Metz-Frescaty. (Alexandre Gannier collection)



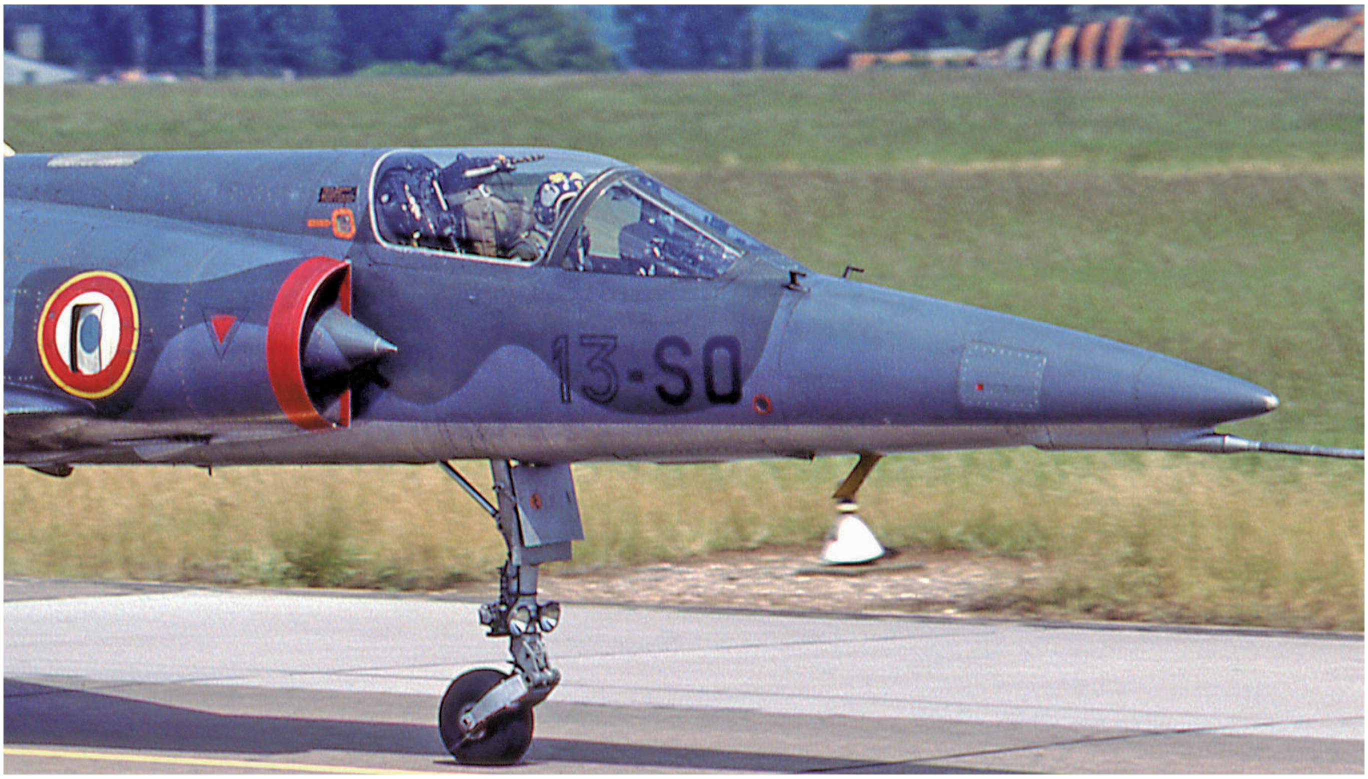
Detail of the instrument panel of the Mirage 5F, quite pristine compared to the screen of the Mirage Pantera. (Pierre-Clément Got)



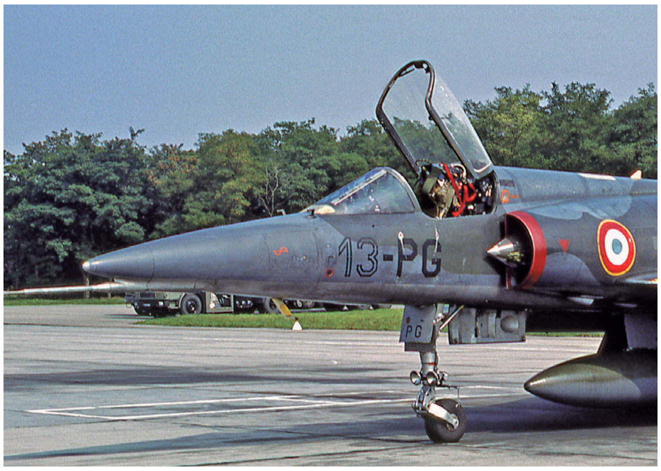
First vertical stabilizer painting scheme of the Mirage 5F No. 33, 13-SO of the Auvergne Squadron, 1975. (Alexandre Gannier collection)



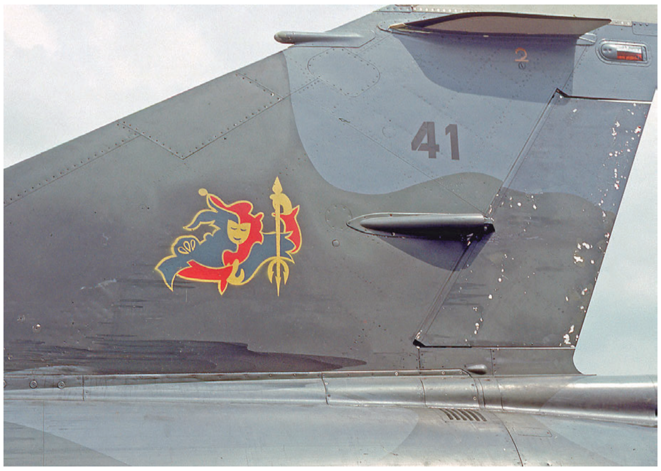
Vertical stabilizer decoration of the Mirage 5F No. 18 of the 3/3 Ardennes Fighter Squadron, 1975. The figure of the boar head decorates the vertical stabilizers of the aircraft of this Squadron since 1944, however, a wild boar mascot has accompanied this Squadron since its inception in 1915 as l'AR44. In 1983, the wild boar of that time was baptized as "Aldo", name maintained by the current wild boar and that accompanies its Squadron at Air Base 133 in Nancy-Ochey, where the Mirage 2000D operates. (Alain Crosnier)



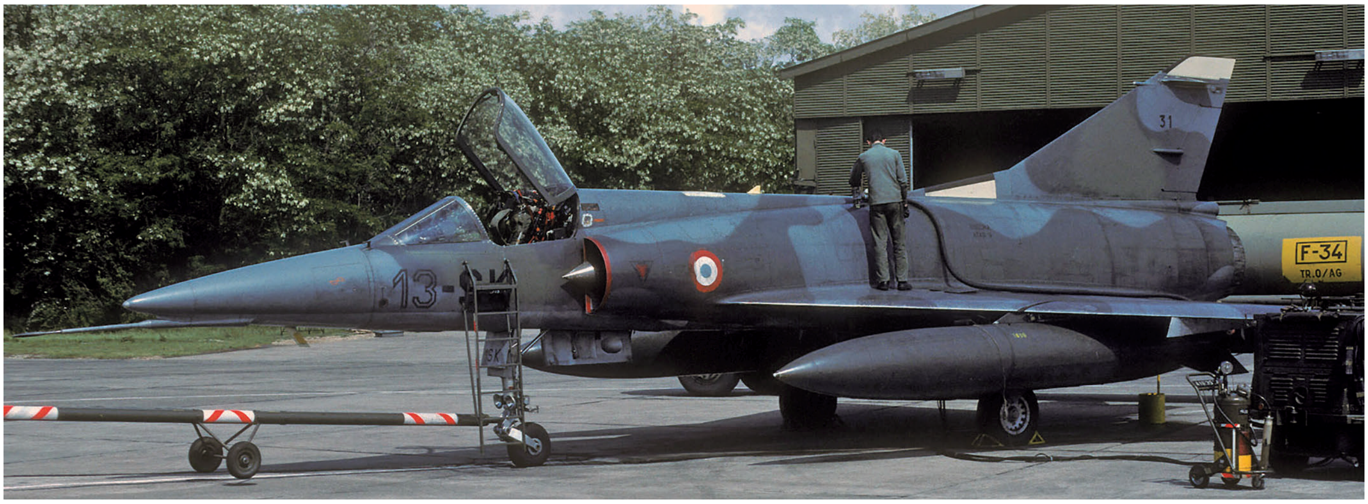
Mirage 5F No. 33, numeral 13-SO, belonging to the 3/13 Auvergne Fighter Squadron, taxiing at Colmar airbase, 1981. (Alexandre Gannier)



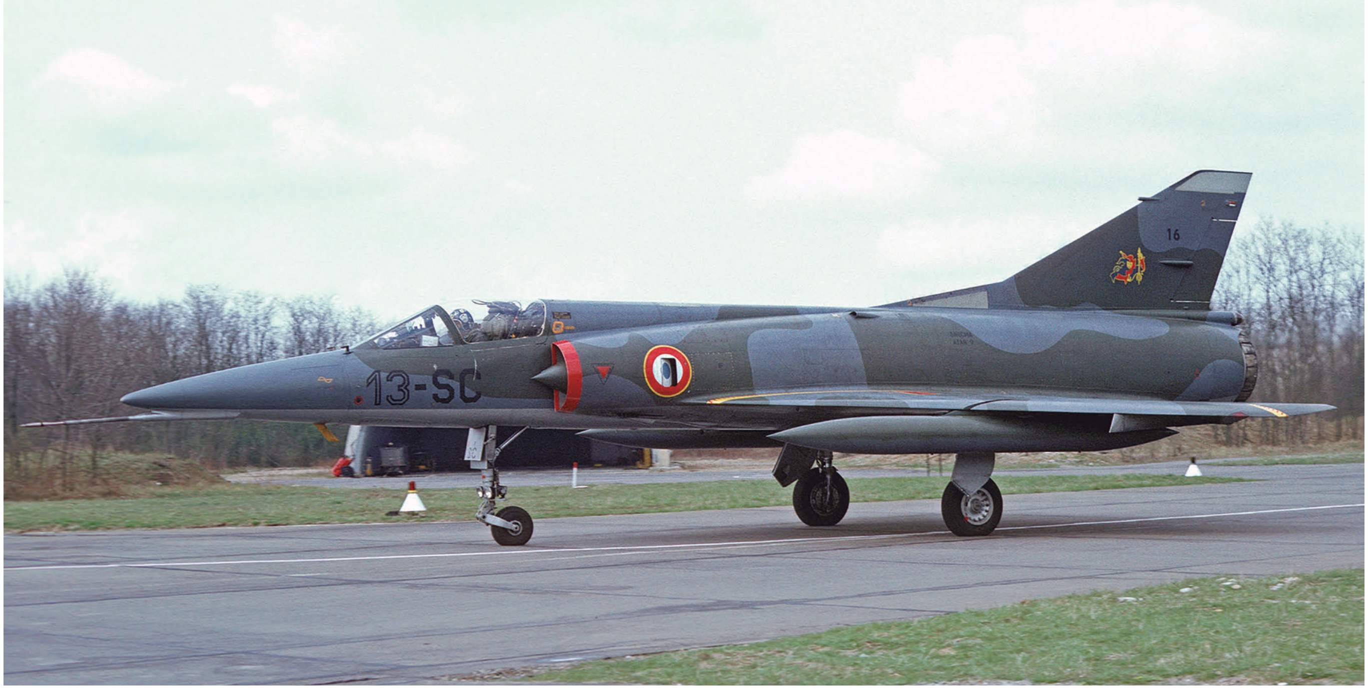
Front section of the Mirage 5F No. 15, 13-PG, of the 2/13 Alpine Fighter Squadron, 1982. The use of large cockades is observed. (Alexandre Gannier collection)



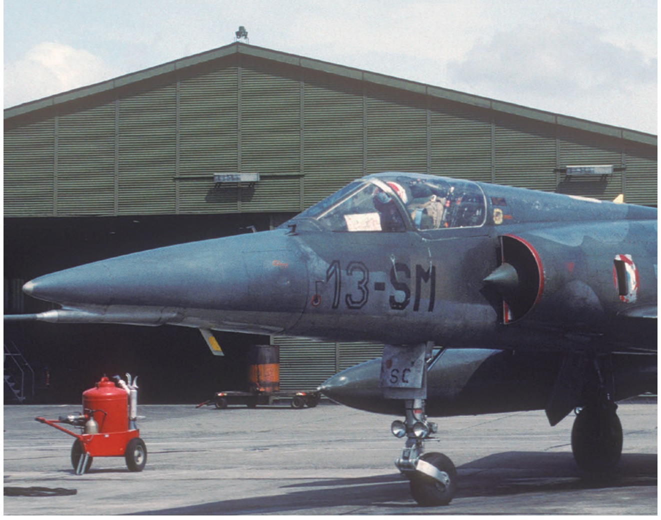
Paint scheme of the vertical stabilizer of the Mirage 5F No. 41 of the 3/13 Auvergne Fighter Squadron, 1978. (Alexandre Gannier)



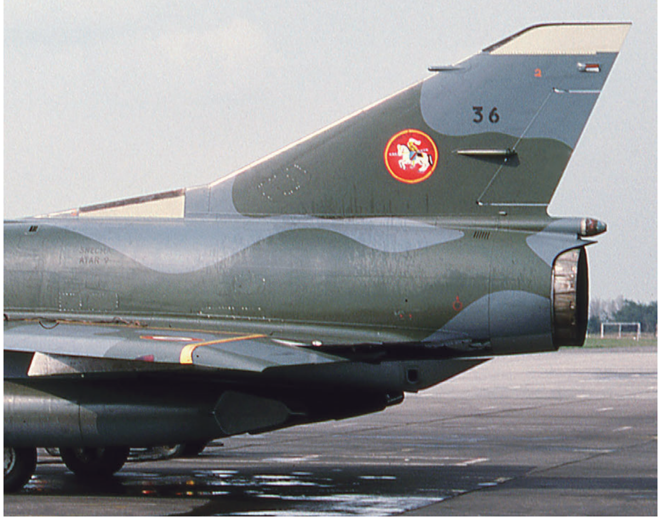
Dassault Mirage 5F No. 31, 13-SK, from 3/13 Auvergne Fighter Squadron of the Armée de l'Air, being refueled in May 1988, Colmar-Meyenheim Air Base. (Alexandre Gannier)



Taxiing for a new mission, the Mirage 5F No 16, 13-SC, future Chilean aircraft, April 14, 1978, Meyen-heim airbase. (Alexandre Gannier)

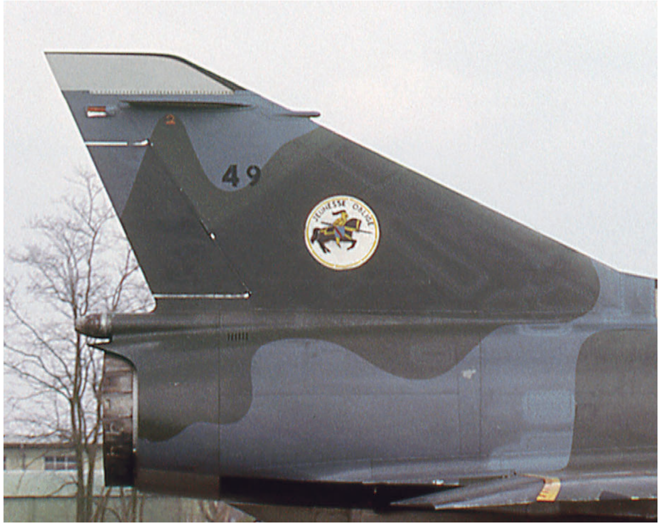


Painting scheme of an aircraft of the Auvergne Squadron, May 1988, Colmar Air Base -Meyenheim. (Alexandre Gannier)

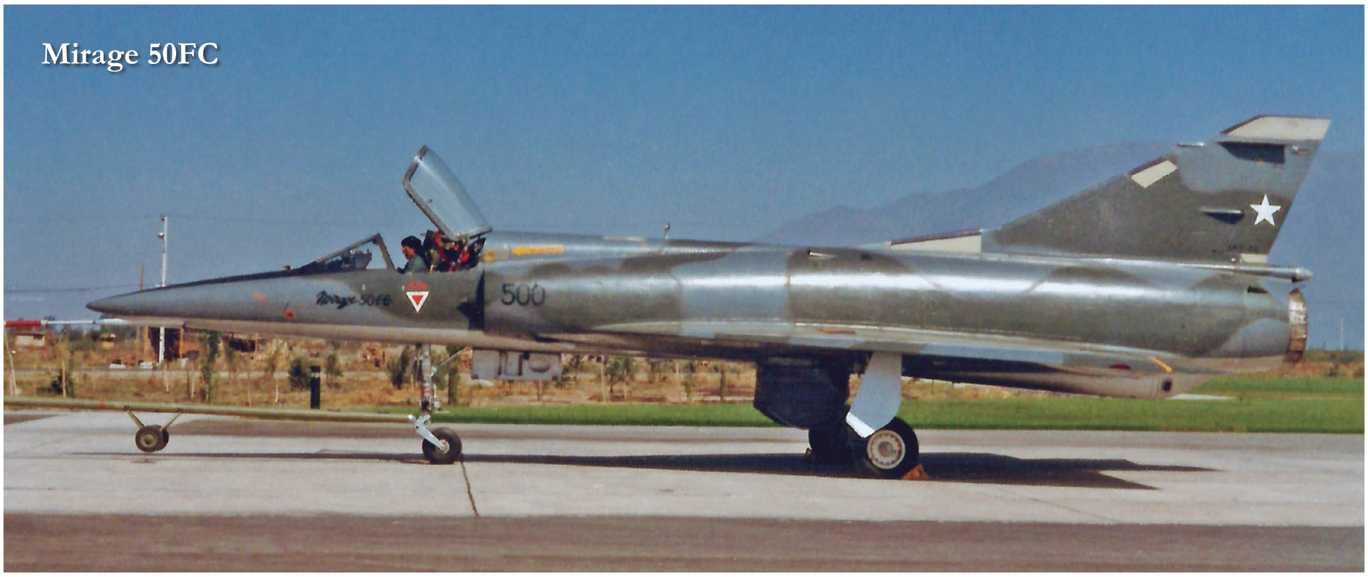


Coat of arms of Squadron 2/13 Alps sported by Mirage 5F No. 36, 13-PU, 14 April 1978. (Alexandre Gannier collection)

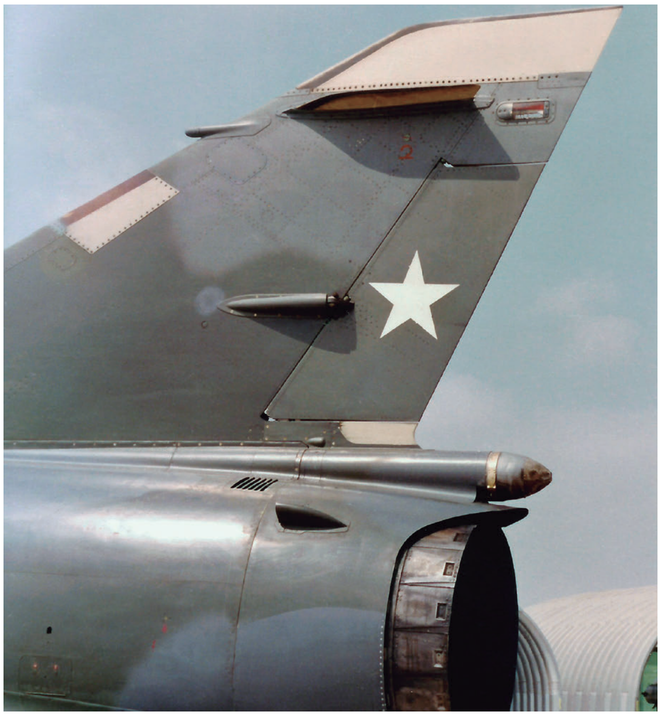
Return from a mission by a pilot of 2/13 Alps Fighter Squadron, May 1988, Colmar-Meyenheim. (Alexandre Gannier)



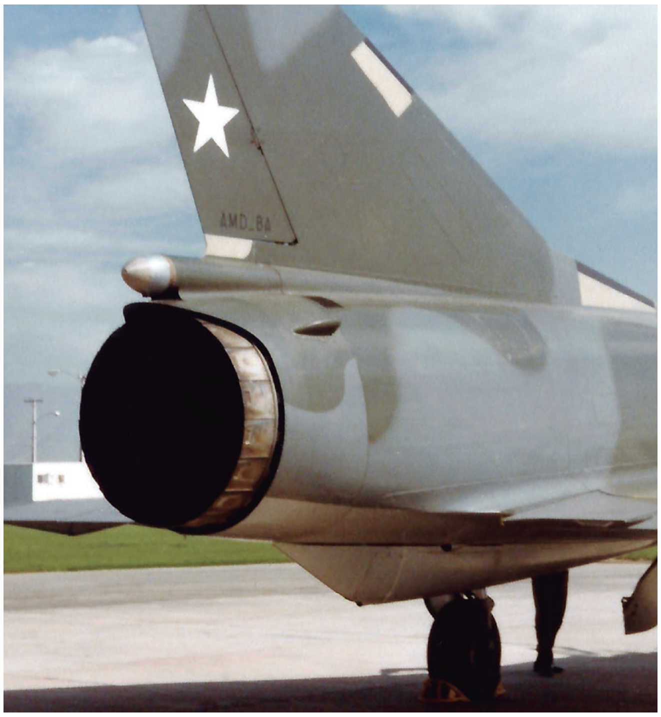
Coat of arms of Squadron 2/13 Alpes sported by Mirage 5F No. 49, 13-PN, 14 April 1978. (Alexandre Gannier collection)



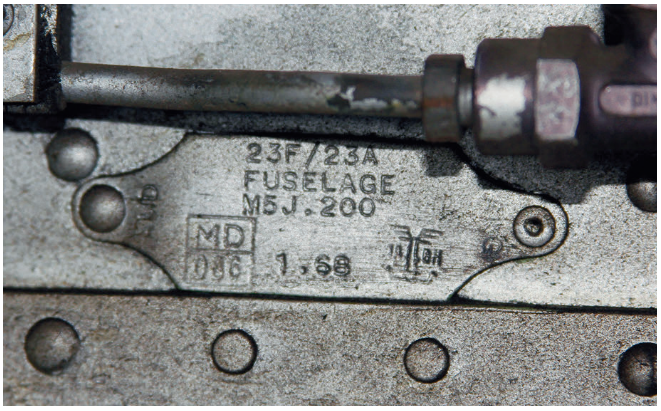
Mirage 50FC No. 500 (No. 30), early in its operation in the Aviation Group No. 4 at Pudahuel Air Base in 1981. This Mirage would be re-registered as No. 508, according to a directive of the FACh that eliminated the numerals "00". (Germán Lüer)



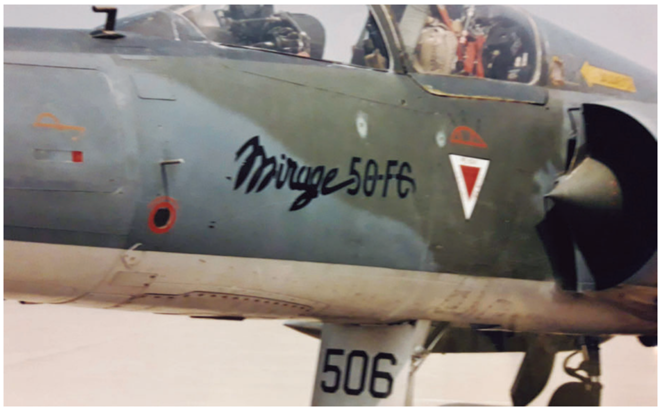
The tail section of the Mirage 50FC No. 506, with details of the antennas, the fairing of the brake parachute and part of the engine exhaust pipe. (Rino Poletti)



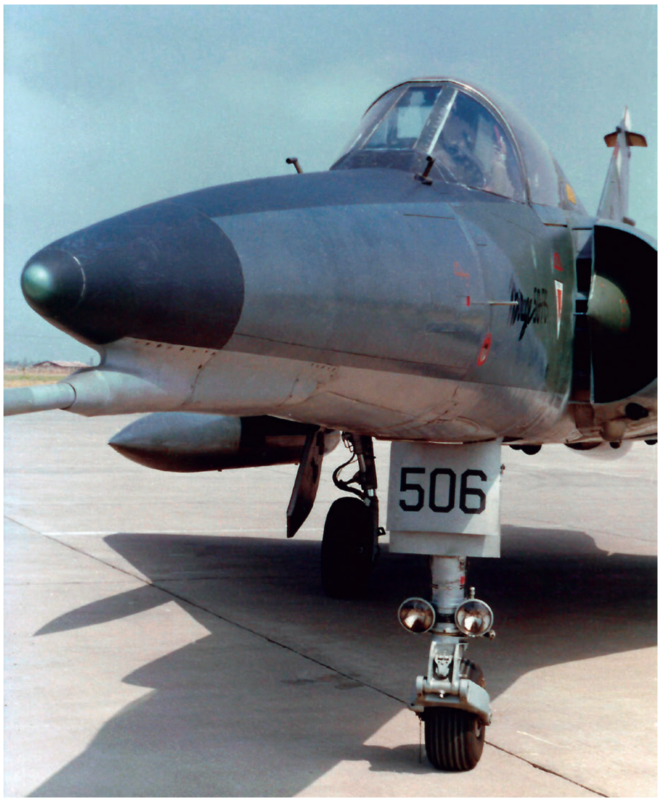
Rear section of the Mirage 50 FC No. 500. It can be observed that it wears a tail cone from another air-craft. (Germán Lüer)



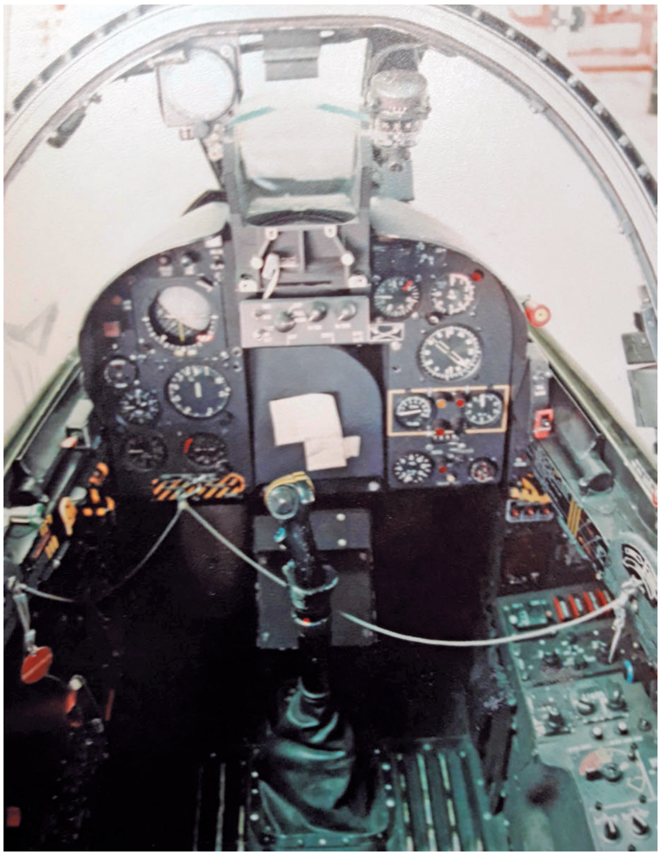
Identity plate revealing the original Mirage 5J, corresponding to the Mirage 50 No. 506. (Alvaro Romero)



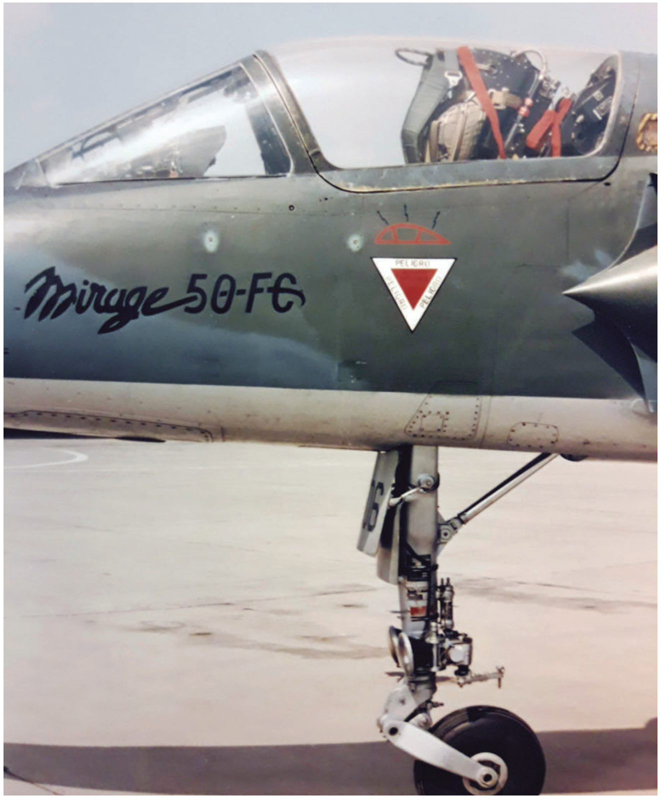
Details of the stencils of the front section of the Mirage 50 No. 506. (Rino Poletti Collection)



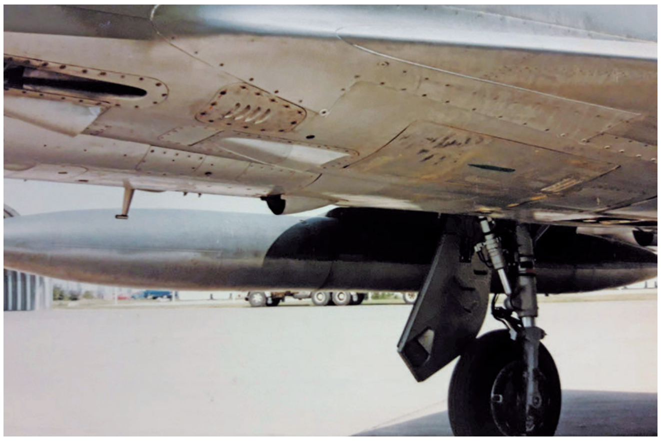
Detail of the front section of the Mirage 50FC No. 506, with the detail of the radome of the telemetry radar, the landing gear, and the air intake of the engine. The scheme used by this aircraft corresponds to a variation of the original, by the painting of the nose cone and the replacement of the format of the French numerals. (Rino Poletti)



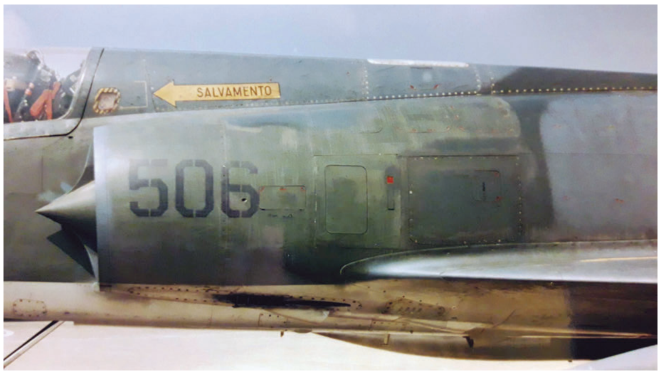
One of the few photographs of the cockpit of a Mirage 50FC, during the assembly process. The installation of equipment in the center console of the instrument panel is still missing. The safety pins placed in their corresponding places are observed, to avoid an incident during the ground operation. (Rino Poletti collection)



Section of the cockpit of the Mirage 50FC No. 506, where you can see the detail of the ejection seat and the nose landing gear. (Rino Poletti)

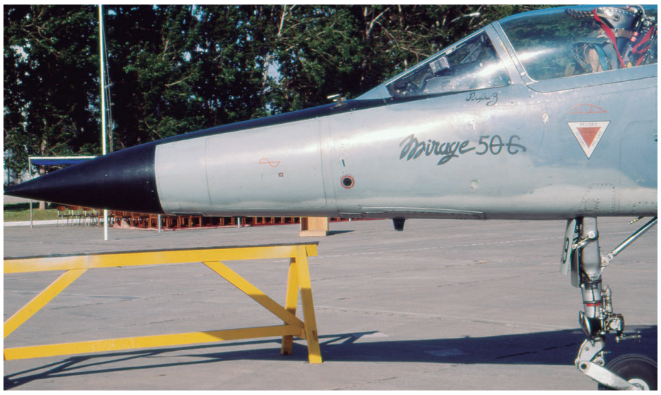


Detail of the lower surface of the Mirage 50FC No. 506, where access and inspection covers can be observed. (Rino Poletti collection)

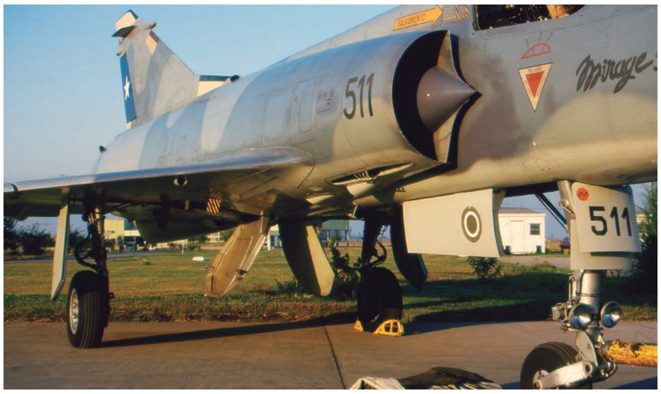


A photograph of the Mirage 50FC No. 506 for modeling specialists with "Weathering" techniques. The operational hustle and bustle of this aircraft is evident: gunpowder stains around the exit of the cannons, stains of dirt and paint in different shades and screws and rivets unpainted. It is also evident the stencil of the numeral in its new format, especially the notch of the number 5. (Rino Poletti Collection)

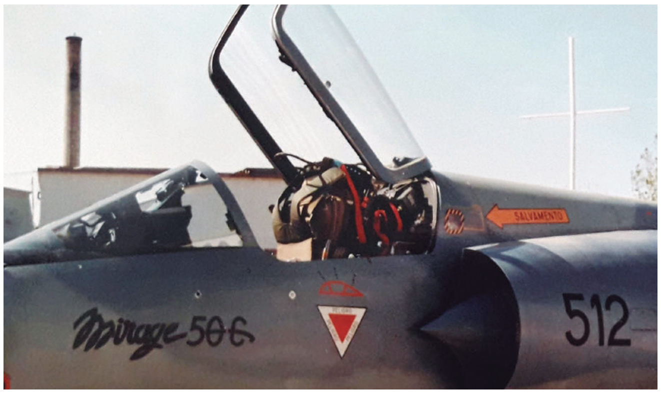
Mirage 50C/DC



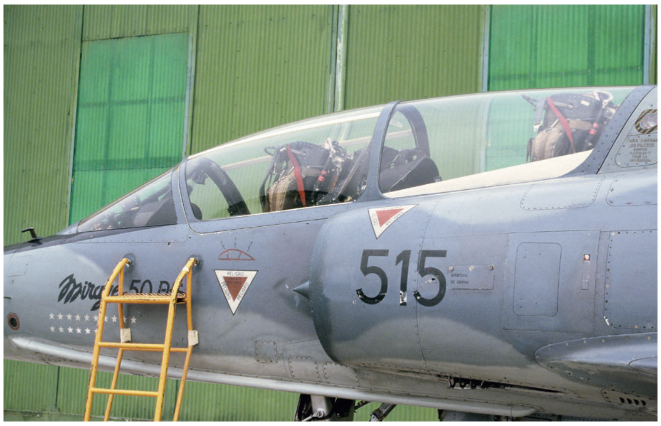
Detail of the front section of the Mirage 50C No. 509, where you can see the detail of the radar radome. (Rino Poletti collection)



Detail of the lower fuselage of the Mirage 50C No. 511, where you can see the detail of the landing gear. (Rino Poletti collection)

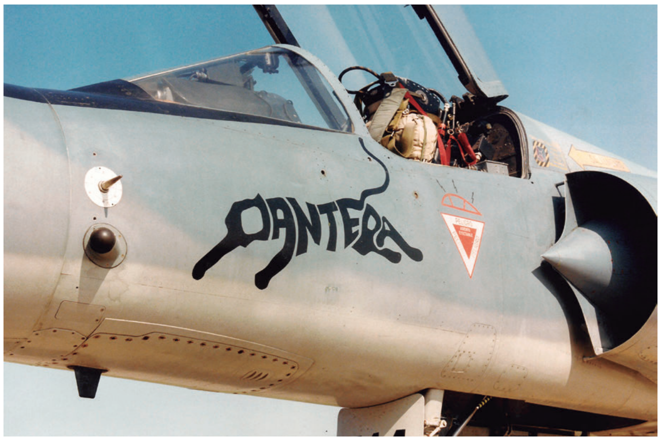


Front section of the Mirage 50C No. 512, where you can see the detail of stencils and numeral. (Rino Poletti collection)

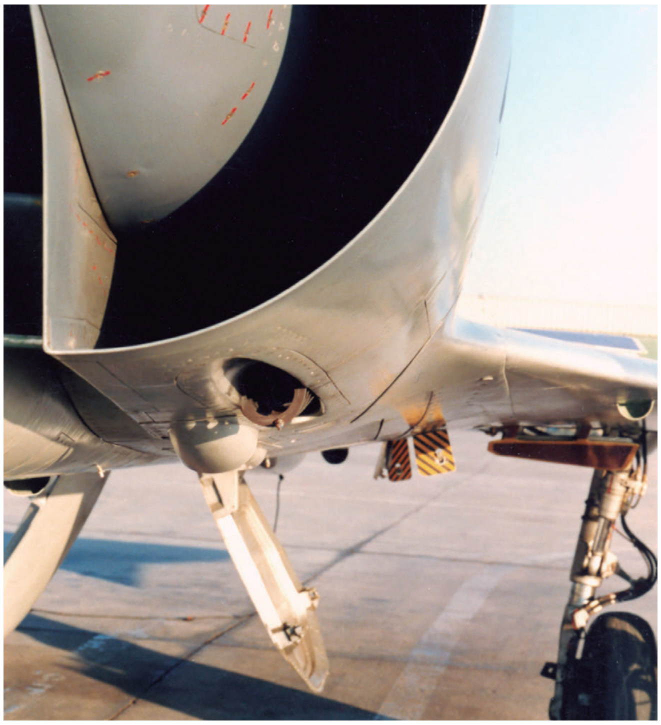


The cockpit section of the Mirage 50DC No. 515, where you can see the detail of stencils, numerals, panels, and ejection seats. (Via Dan Toro)

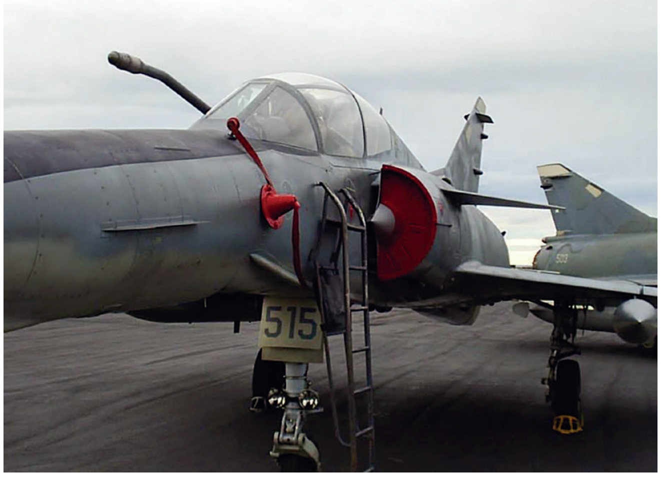
Mirage 50CN/DC Pantera



Left side view of the Mirage 50CN No. 514, prototype of the project, where you can see the detail of the front antenna of the RWR and the stencil of the promotional panther. (Rino Poletti collection)

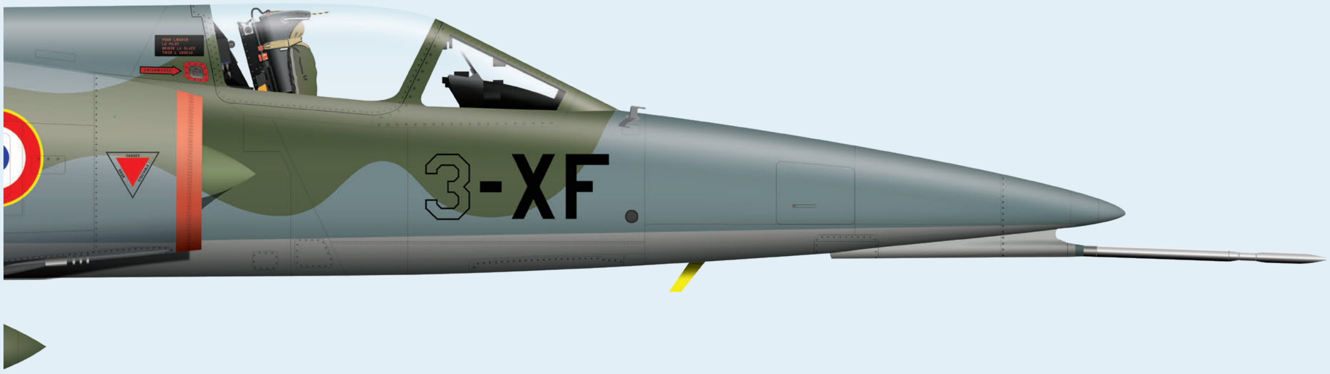


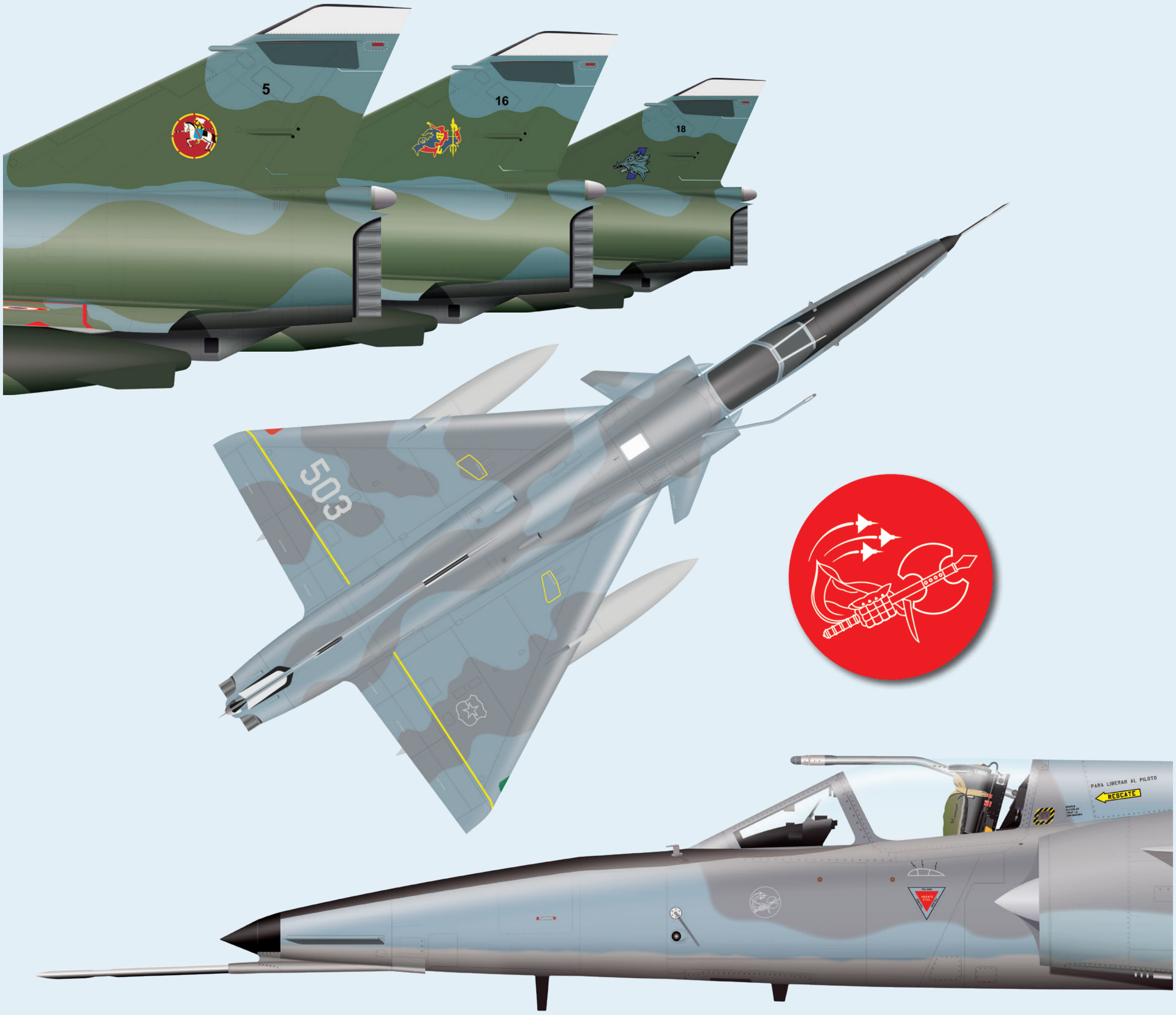
Left front view of the Mirage 50CN No. 514, where you can see the detail of the engine air intake and the gun barrel fairing. (Rino Poletti collection)



Left front view of the Mirage 50DCN No. 515, where you can see the detail of the paneling. (Jorge Ti-ma)

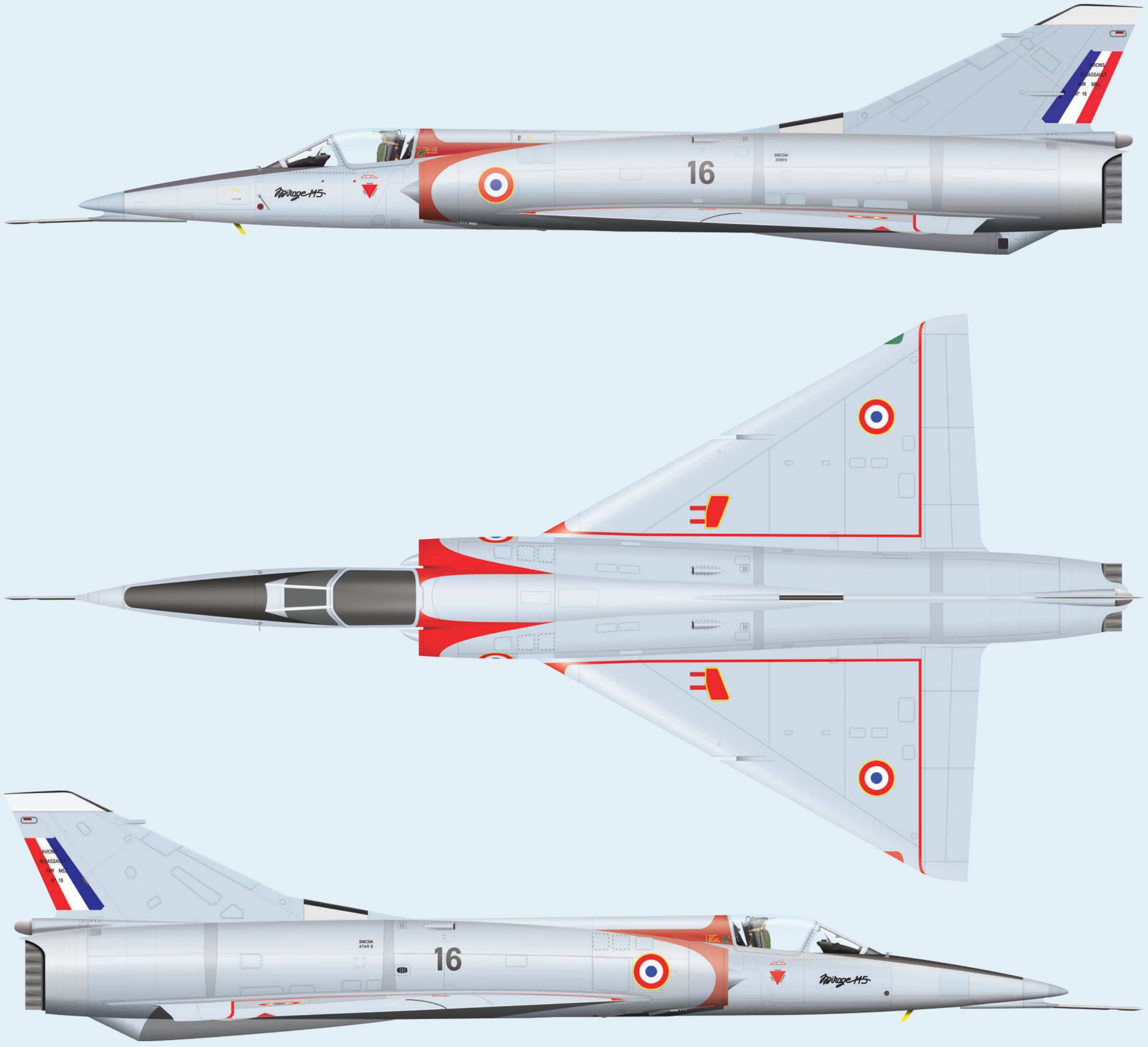
Mirage 5J/5F/5O in Colors




5
16
18
503
PARA LIBERAR AL PILOTO
RESCATE

Mirage 5J - Israel Defense Force

Mirage 5J, No. 16, Châteaudun Air Base, March 1968.

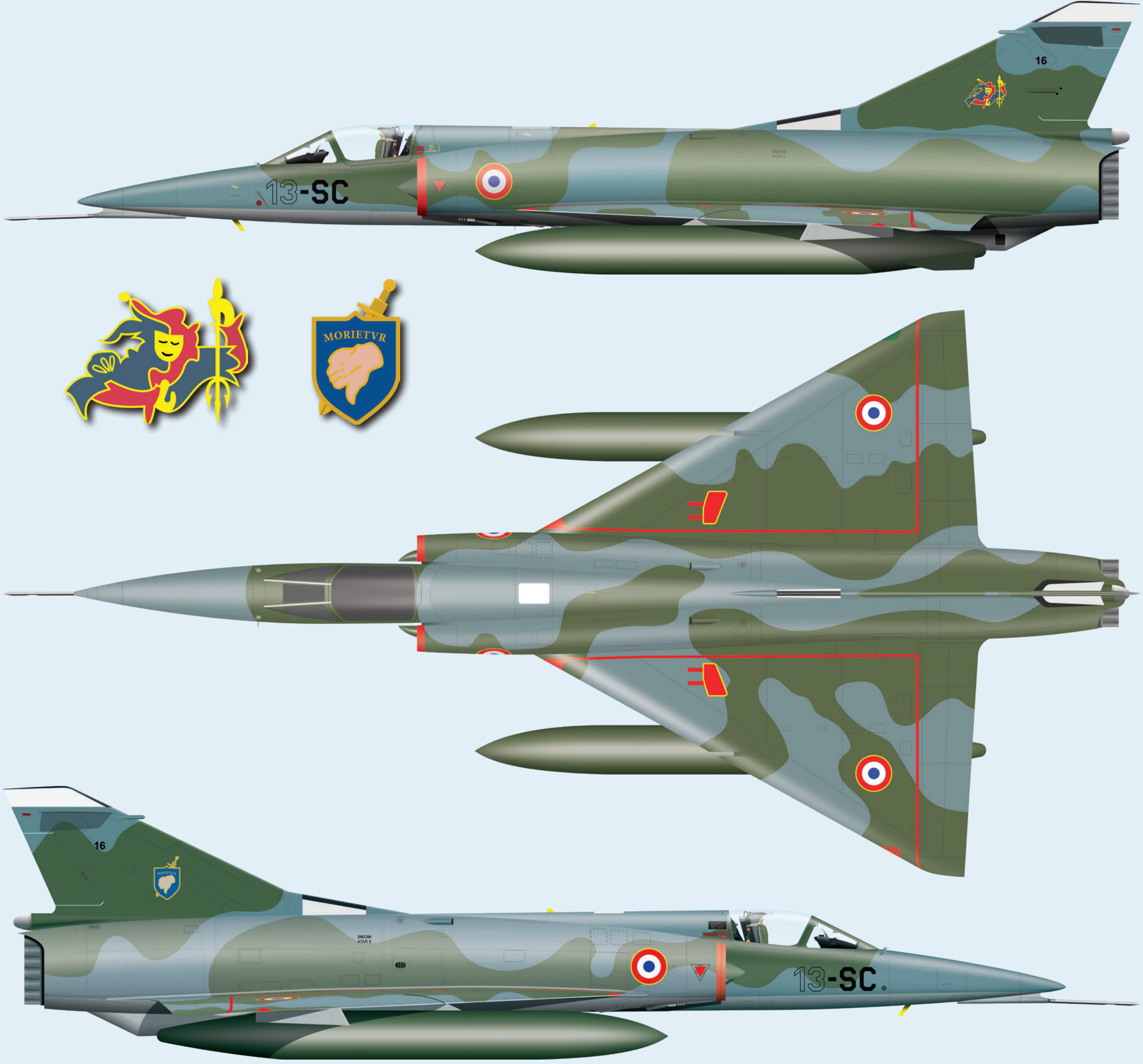


Guide of Colors	⬜	⬜	🟥
Federal Standard		Light Gull Grey **36440**	Matt Scarlett **31136**
Humbrol	Silver **011**	US Gull Grey **129**	Matt Scarlett **060**
Gunze Sangyo	Silver **H8**	**H325**	**H327**

The paint scheme of the Mirage 5J for the Israeli Air Force was the same as that used by the Mirage IIICJ, with a metallic finish for most of the surfaces, where the different alloys used in their construction could be distinguished. The cockades and rudder were painted in the colors of the French Air Force and in the center of the fuselage the serial numbers were distinguished in a large format. An-other distinguishable aspect was the typical red applications on the edge of the engine air intakes and the rear area of the cockpit. Likewise, the name of the Dassault variant - Mirage M5 was distinguishable, in the typical manuscript format used by this builder in his aircraft.

Mirage 5F - Armée de l’Air

Mirage 5F, No. 16, 13-SC, 3/13 Auvergne Fighter Squadron,
Colmar Air Base, 1978.

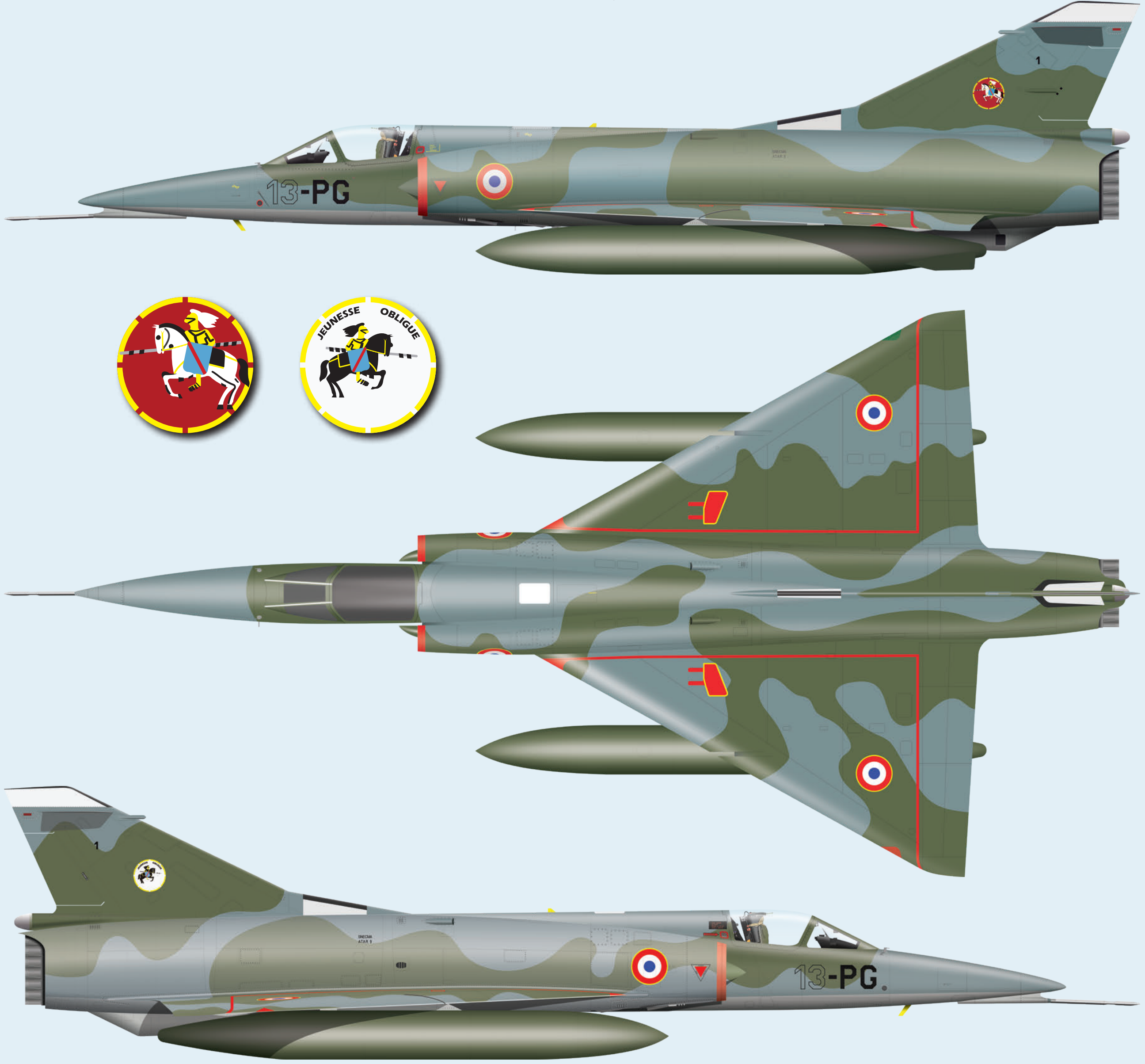


Guide of Colors	🟦	🟩	⬜
Federal Standard	Dark Gray **36152**	Dark Green **34079**	Aluminum **17178**
Humbrol	Blue Grey **2**	Leaf Green **116**	Chrome Silver **191**
Gunze Sangyo		**H309**	

The Mirage 5F entered service in 1972, using the metallic finish and applications with which they were to be delivered to Israel. In 1975 a 3-tone paint scheme was added to the plane with a scheme typical of the aircraft used by NATO, in this case a dark grey color for the upper surface with the application of dark green spots in a very characteristic pattern for these planes. Meanwhile, the lower surface was painted a light gray color with a metallic touch. The rudder tricolor was removed, keeping the cockades in a large size. While the numerals were on both sides of the fuselage, under the cockpit. The vertical stabilizer was adorned with the shields of the Squadrons where the Mirage 5F operated.

Mirage 5F - Armée de l'Air

Mirage 5F, No. 1, 13-PG, 2/13 Alpes Fighter Squadron,
Colmar Air Base, 1979.

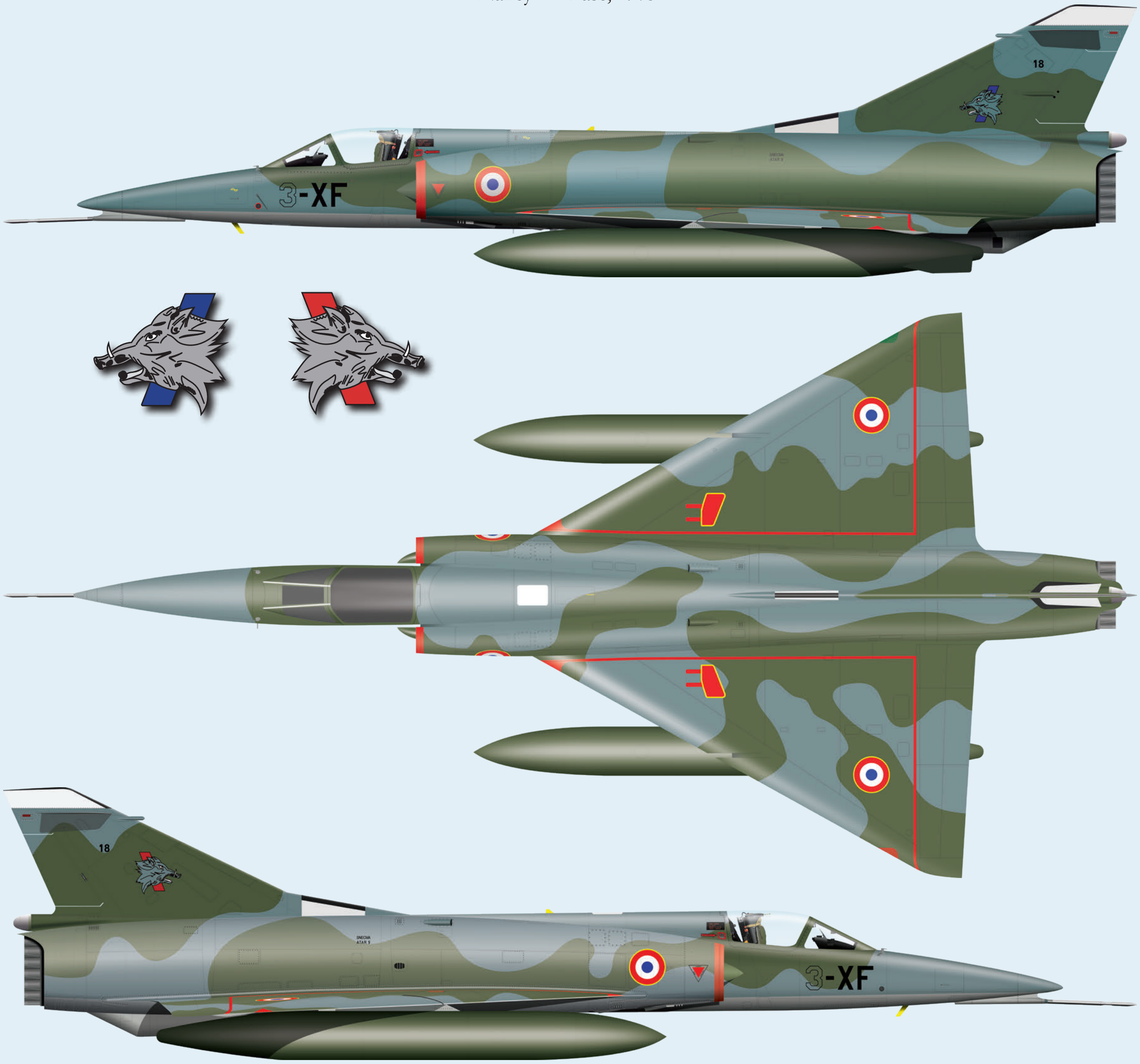


Guide of Colors	🟦	🟩	⬜
Federal Standard	Dark Gray **36152**	Dark Green **34079**	Aluminum **17178**
Humbrol	Blue Grey **2**	Leaf Green **116**	Chrome Silver **191**
Gunze Sangyo		**H309**	

Mirage 5F fighters operated until 1994 in the Armée de l'Air and from 1975 they were painted with this paint scheme, with very few variations during their operational life. Most distinguishable was the use of the shields of the Auvergne, Ardennes, and Alps Fighter Squadrons on either side of the vertical stabilizer. Cockades and numerals were modified in size and format towards the end of aircraft operation, even using low visibility variations in some cases. There are no records of special decorations for the fulfillment of any milestone or when they were removed from service.

Mirage 5F - Armée de l'Air

Mirage 5F, No. 18, 3-XF, 2nd Wing, 3/3 Ardennes Fighter Squadron,
Nancy Air Base, 1975.

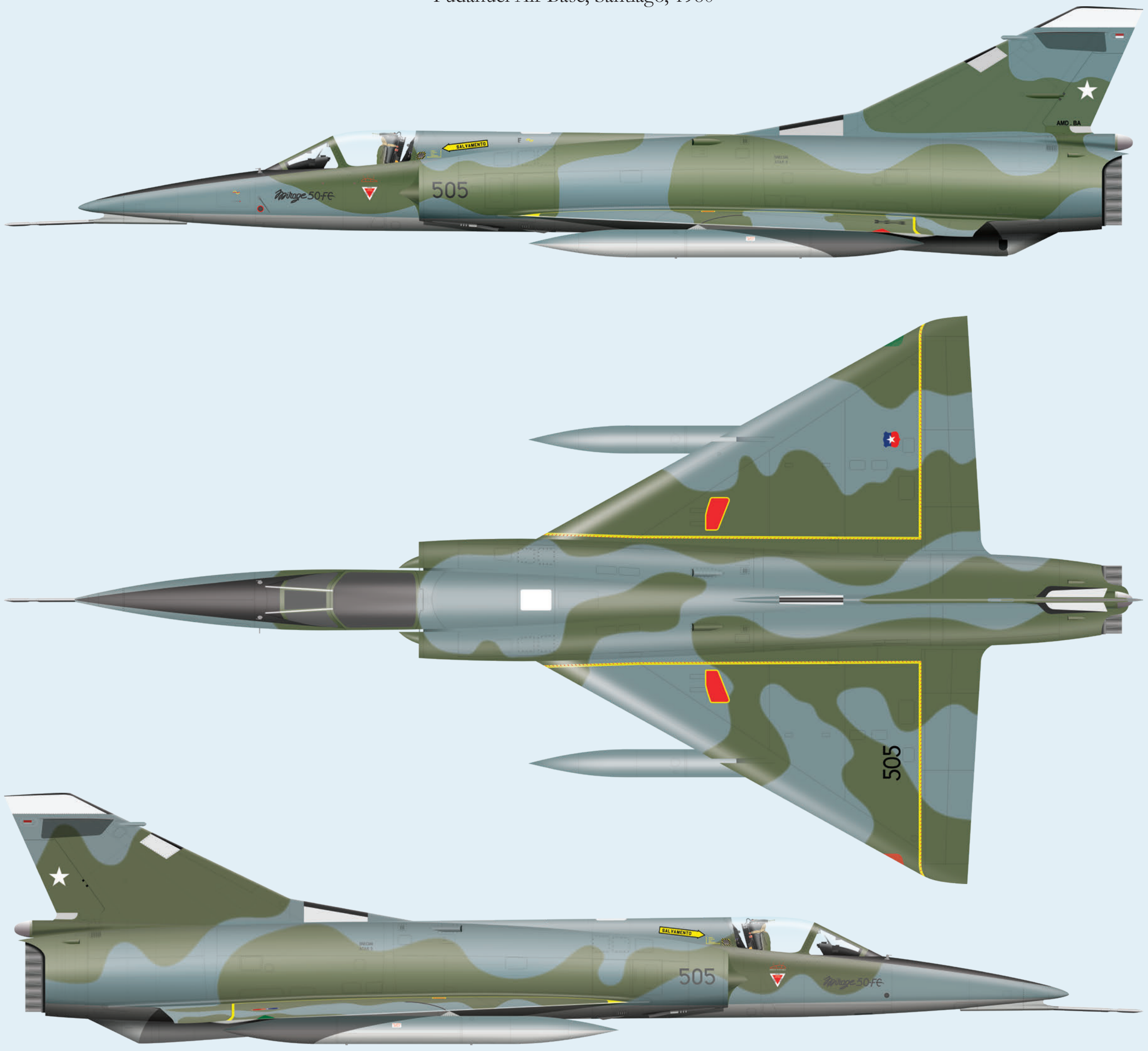


Guide of Colors	🟦	🟩	⬜
Federal Standard	Dark Gray **36152**	Dark Green **34079**	Aluminum **17178**
Humbrol	Blue Grey **2**	Leaf Green **116**	Chrome Silver **191**
Gunze Sangyo		**H309**	

The 3/3 "Ardennes" Fighter Squadron was the second Squadron to operate the Mirage 5F in the Armée de l'Air, at Nancy-Ochey Air Base 133, beginning in July 1974. Their planes maintained their natural metallic finish and their vertical stabilizers were decorated with the traditional boar head of this Squadron, with a blue diagonal bar on the left side and a red one on the right and a large black triangle in the background. That same year the planes began to be camouflaged and the first aircraft painted with the new colors belonged to this Squadron, Mirage 5F No. 19, 3-XG. None of the Mirage 5Fs that passed to the Chilean Air Force operated in this Squadron.

Mirage 50FC - Chilean Air Force

Mirage 50FC, No. 505, c/n 16, Aviation Group No. 4,
Pudahuel Air Base, Santiago, 1980

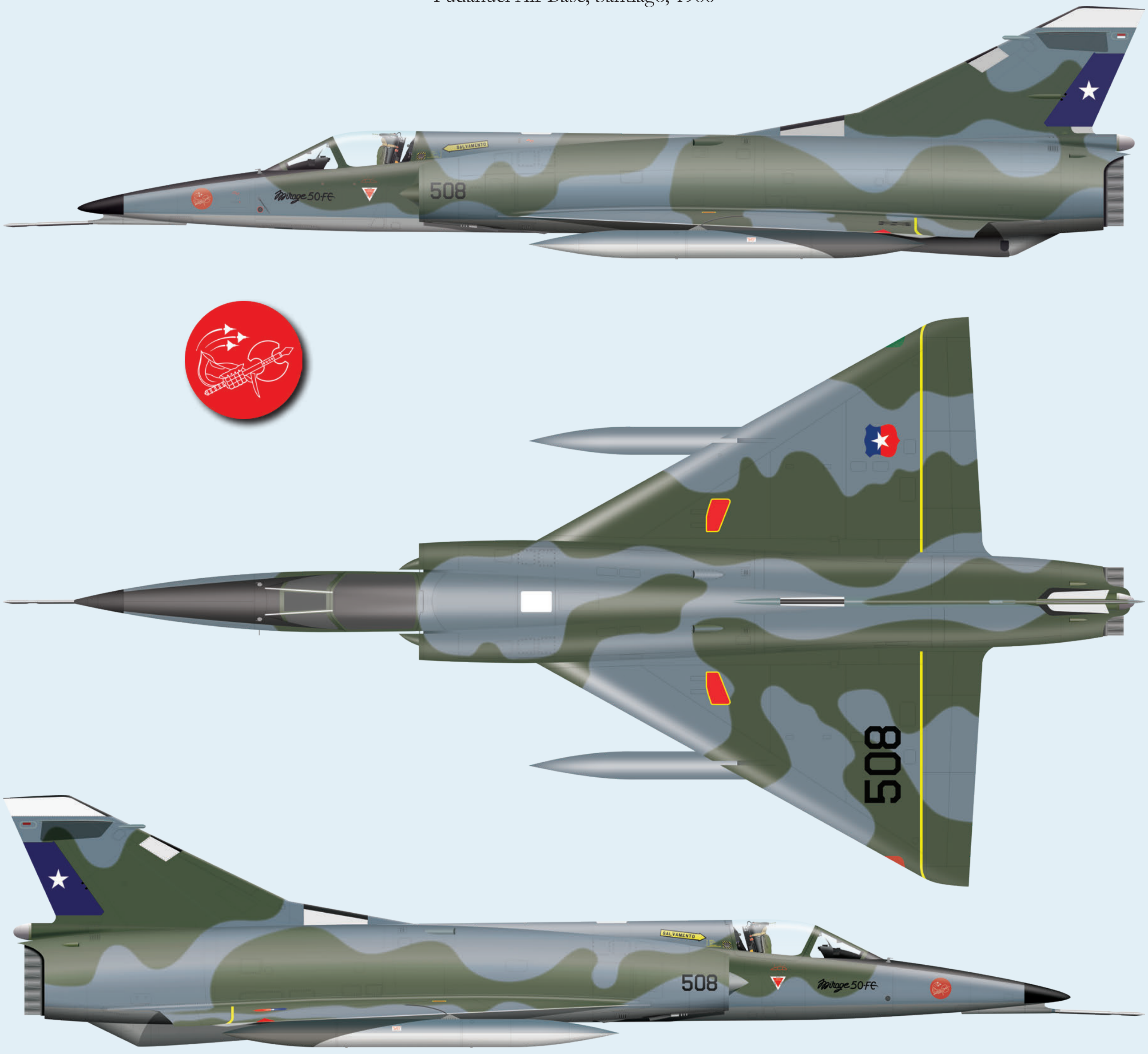


Guide of Colors	🟦	🟩	⬜
Federal Standard	Dark Gray **36152**	Dark Green **34079**	Aluminum **17178**
Humbrol	Blue Grey **2**	Leaf Green **116**	Chrome Silver **191**
Gunze Sangyo		**H309**	

The paint scheme with which the Mirage 50FC were delivered was similar to the Mirage of the French Air Force: Medium gray for the upper surface with the application of a pattern of spots in olive green color without blurring. The lower surface kept the metallic light gray color with a straight cut. The numerals were painted in black at the exit of the engine intake inputs in a rounded format. The rudder was not painted with the typical blue color, leaving only the white star. The model's name of the plane was applied to both sides of the bow, under the cockpit. The wings kept the typical configuration of FACh aircraft with the numeral on the upper left wing and the shield on the right, while in reverse order under the wings.

Mirage 50FC - Chilean Air Force

Mirage 50FC, No. 508, c/n 30, Aviation Group No. 4,
Pudahuel Air Base, Santiago, 1986

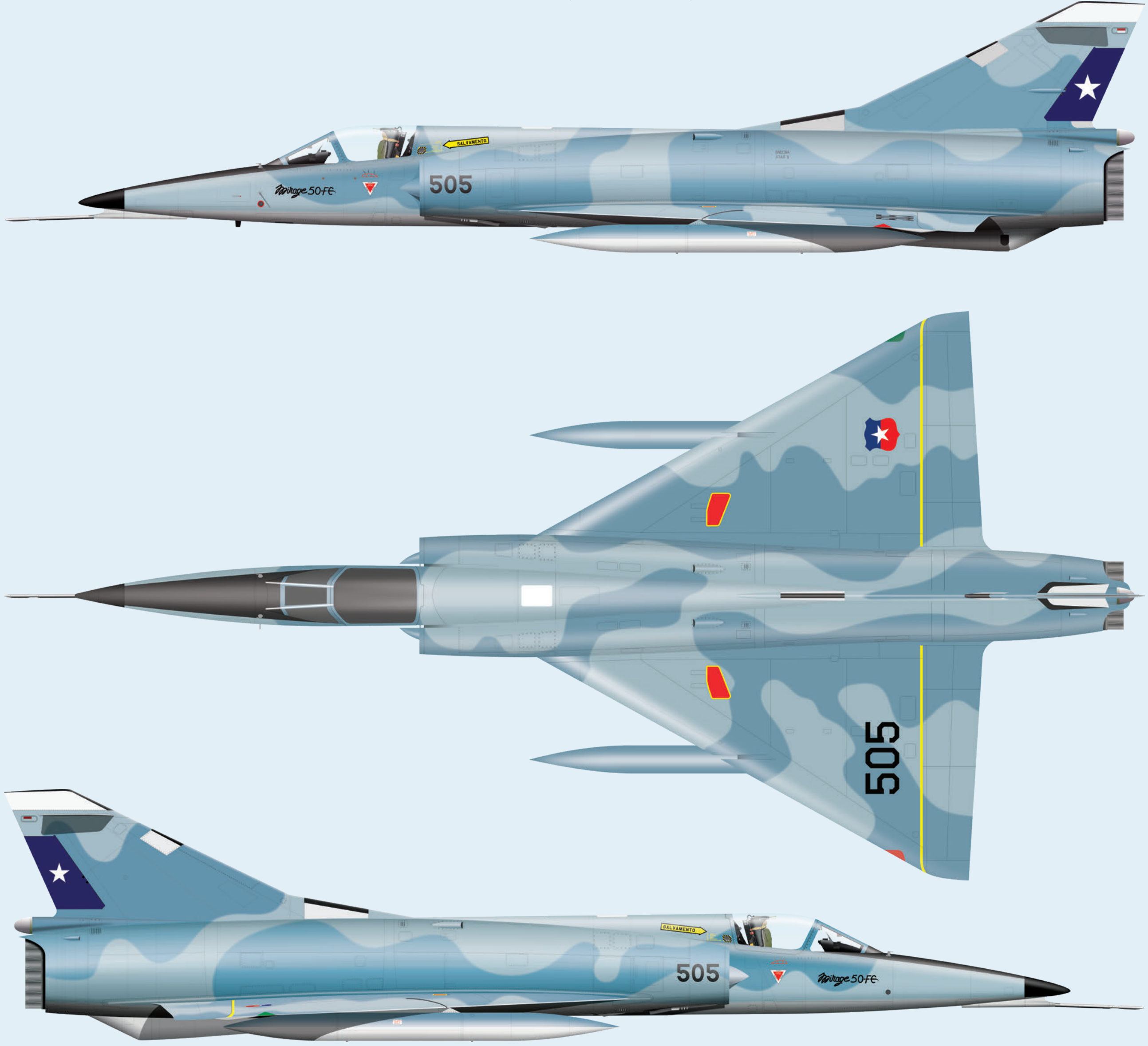


Guide of Colors	🟦	🟩	⬜
Federal Standard	Dark Gray **36152**	Dark Green **34079**	Aluminum **17178**
Humbrol	Blue Grey **2**	Leaf Green **116**	Chrome Silver **191**
Gunze Sangyo		**H309**	

As the Mirage fleet entered major inspections, their paint scheme was slightly altered in the mid-1980s. The most noticeable changes were the application of black color for the small radome of the aircraft's telemetry radar. It also began to observe some Mirages with the blue color for the rudder. The rounded numbers began to disappear, being replaced by a format more similar to that of aircraft of North American origin. The colors also experienced a change of tonality, being observed in most of the reference photographs, darker tones than the originals. Finally, some Mirages were painted in stencil the shield of Aviation Group No. 4 in red on the nose section on one or both sides.

Mirage 50FC - Chilean Air Force

Mirage 50FC, No. 505, c/n 16, Aviation Group No. 4,
Chabunco Air Base, Punta Arenas, 1987

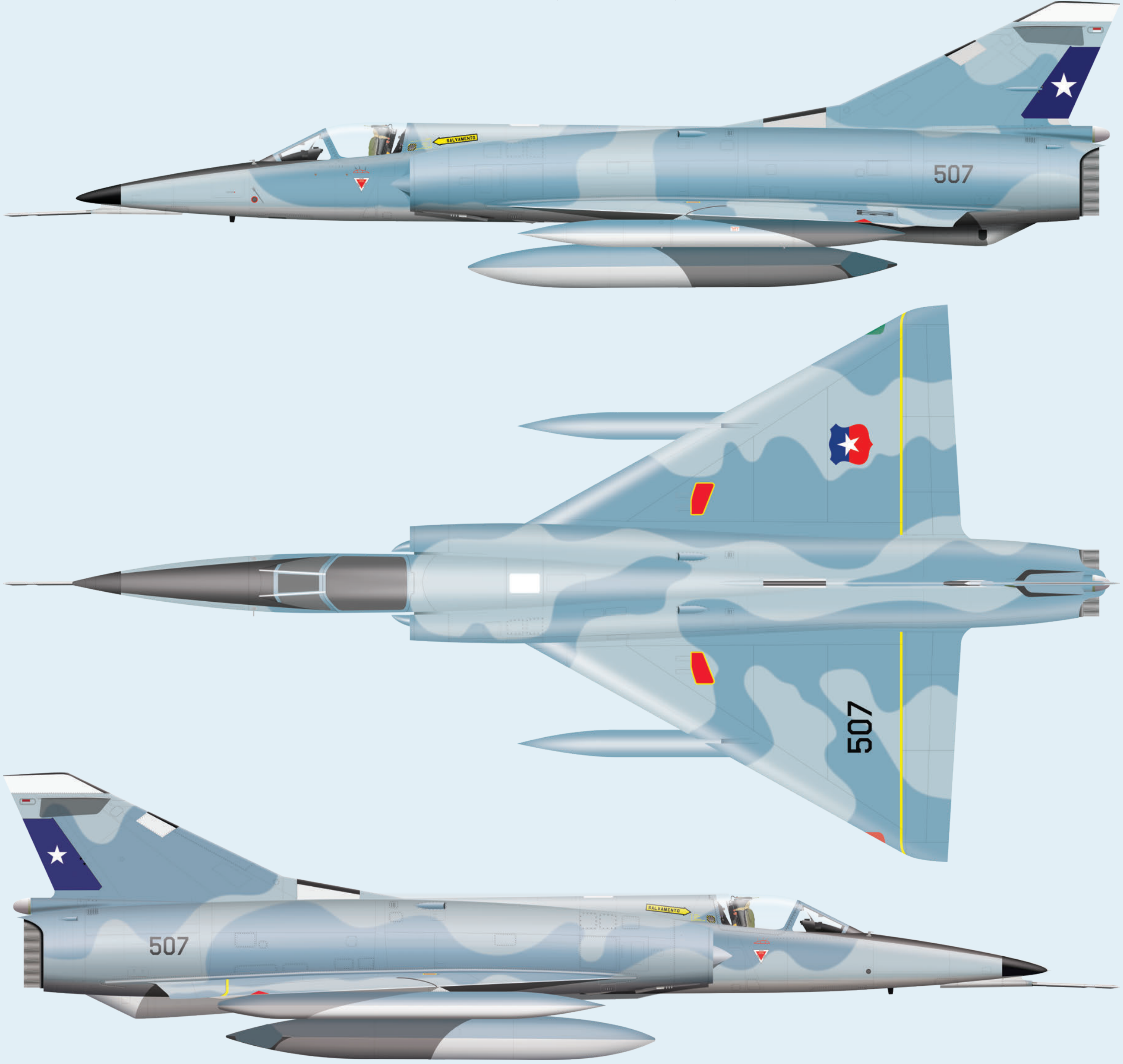


Guide of Colors	🟦	🟦	⬜
Federal Standard	Light Ghost Grey **36375**	Intermediate Blue **35164**	Light Grey/Gray **36495/36622**
Humbrol	US Ghost Grey **127**	Intermediate Blue **144**	Light Grey **147/28**
Gunze Sangyo	**H308**	Blue Grey **H42**	**H338/H311**

The most noticeable change in the camouflage schemes of the Mirage 50FC was their homologation with the scheme incorporated by the Mirage 50C/DC. Known as "Air Superiority" or "Low Visibility" it consisted of a combination of bluish grays for the upper surface and light gray for the lower one. It was applied once the planes were moved to Punta Arenas, maintaining the patterns of spots and the arrangement of numerals and shields. However, an effort could be observed to standardize the format of the numerals of the Mirage 50C/DC, but in thicker strokes and in some cases the use of a format similar to that applied to the Hunter fleet was observed, especially in the application of the number 5, with its characteristic notch.

Mirage 50FC - Chilean Air Force

Mirage 50FC, No. 507, c/n 28, Aviation Group No. 4,
Chabunco Air Base, Punta Arenas, 1993

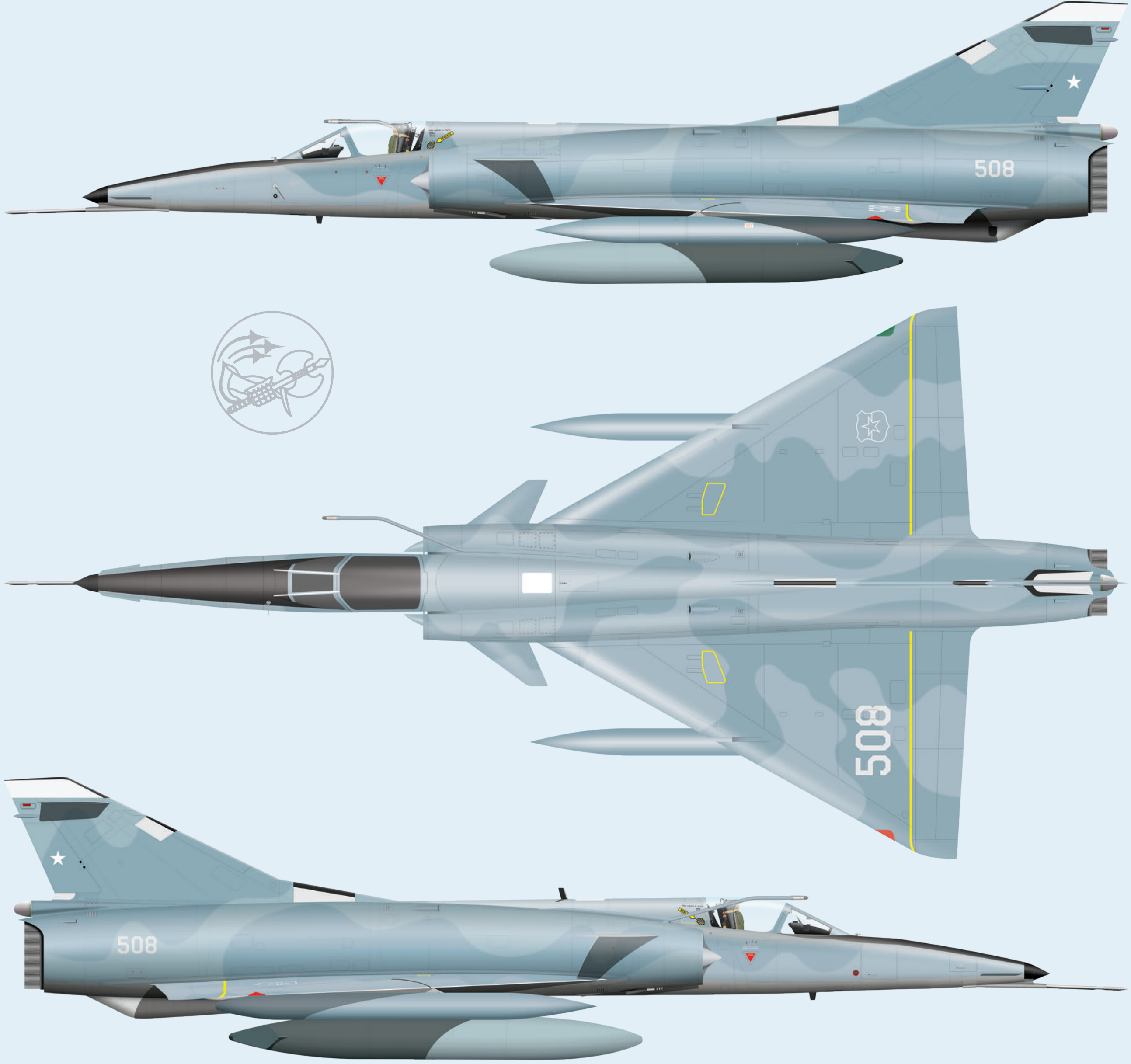


Guide of Colors	🟦	🟦	⬜
Federal Standard	Light Ghost Grey **36375**	Intermediate Blue **35164**	Light Grey/Gray **36495/36622**
Humbrol	US Ghost Grey **127**	Intermediate Blue **144**	Light Grey **147/28**
Gunze Sangyo	**H308**	Blue Grey **H42**	**H338/H311**

A second "Air Superiority" scheme began to be applied in the Mirage 50FC, as the first Mirage Pantera began to leave the production line and corresponded to 50C variant. Slight changes were applied in the pattern of stains, the tonalities and in the location of the fuselage numerals, which were moved to the rear of the engine. The idea of this homologation of schemes was of a practical nature and perhaps to confuse the number of aircraft modified or to be modified, due to project Pantera was extending too long. Along with the change of painting scheme, the appearance or disappearance of some antennas, specifically those of the Radar Warning Receiver, could be observed.

Mirage 50CN Pantera - Chilean Air Force

Mirage 50FC, No. 508, c/n 30, Aviation Group No. 4,
Chabunco Air Base, Punta Arenas, 1994

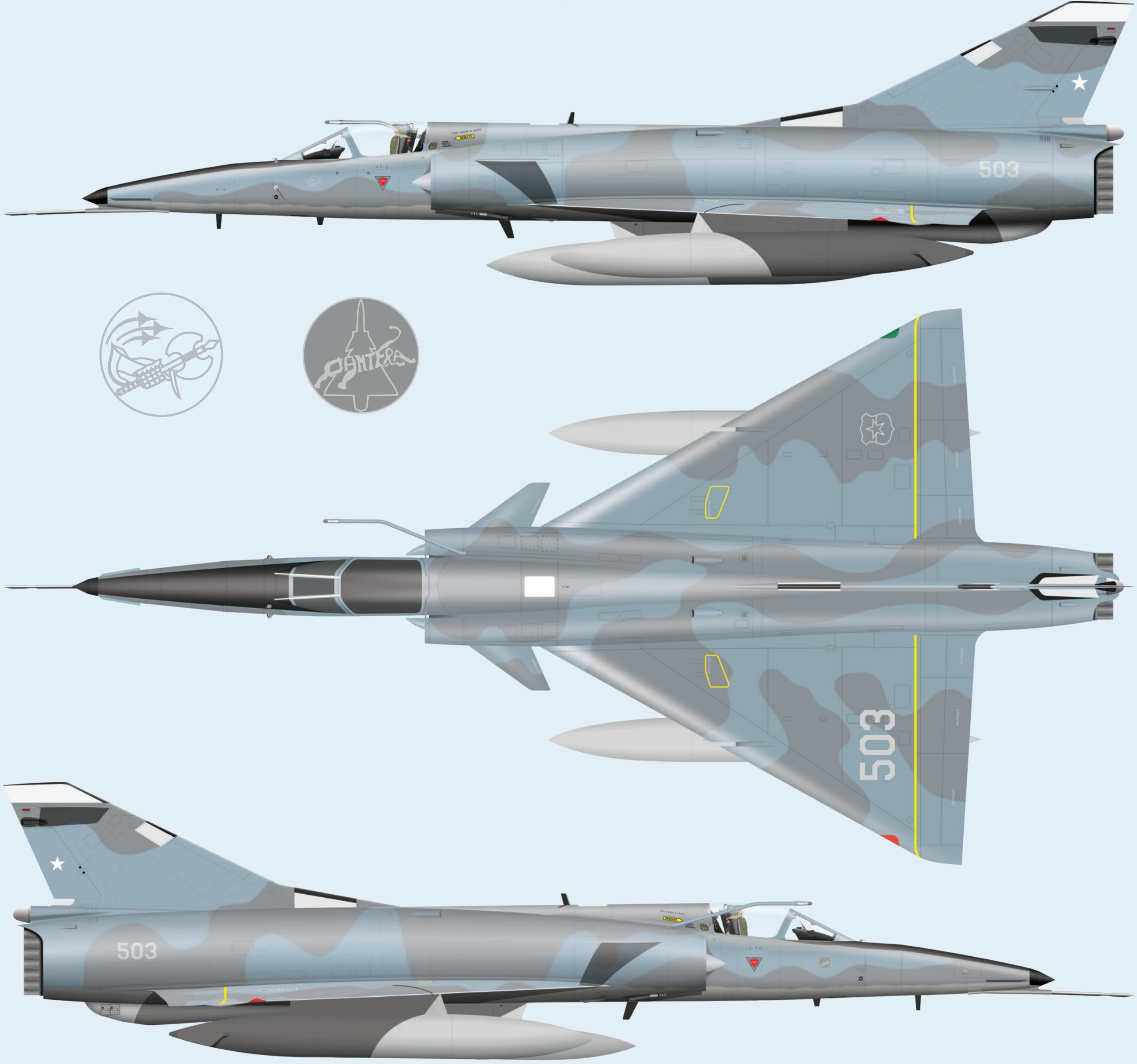


Guide of Colors	🟦	🟦	⬜
Federal Standard	Light Ghost Grey **36375**	Intermediate Blue **35164**	Light Grey/Gray **36495/36622**
Humbrol	US Ghost Grey **127**	Intermediate Blue **144**	Light Grey **147/28**
Gunze Sangyo	**H308**	Blue Grey **H42**	**H338/H311**

The first paint scheme of the production Mirage Pantera differed from that used by the prototype Mirage (No. 514). The tones dropped in intensity and its finishes were blurred, while the pattern changed a bit, especially due to the extension of the new nose of the plane. The numerals were painted light gray and were shifted towards the tail of the plane. Again, the blue color of the rudder was abandoned and in some Mirages the use of the shield in low visibility colors began to be applied. Stencils also began to experience a change, with labels or marks appearing for the plane's new access or inspection panels. The famous "SALVAMENTO" was changed to a "RESCATE" in a smaller format.

Mirage 50CN Pantera - Chilean Air Force

Mirage 50FC, No. 503, c/n 5, Aviation Group No. 4,
Chabunco Air Base, Punta Arenas, 2006

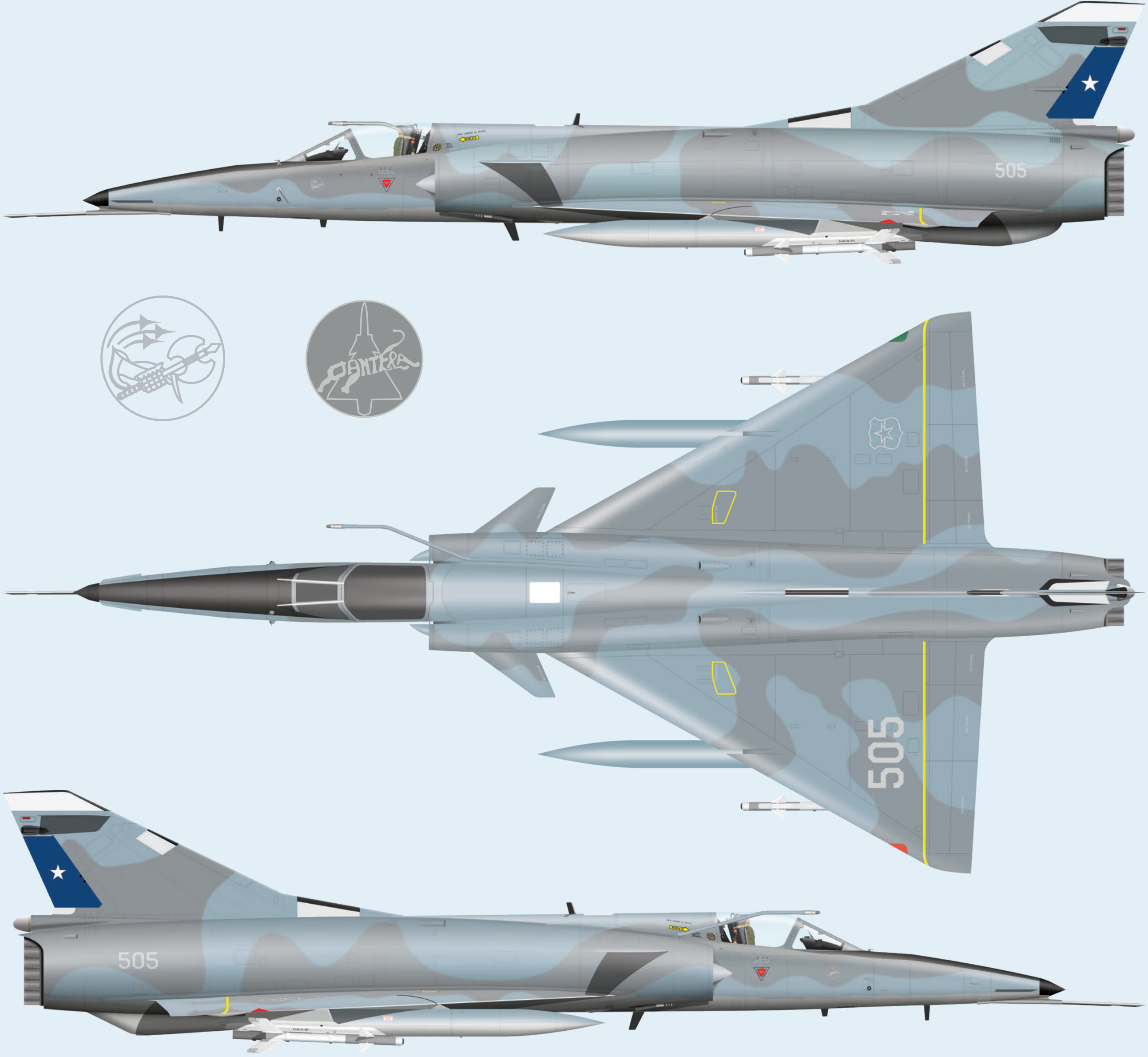


At the FIDAE of 2006, the Mirage Pantera No. 503 was shown in static exposure and in flight, just one year before the end of its operational life in the FACh. The painting scheme had recently been applied and the Spotters feasted on the presence of this Mirage, for the sharpness of its colors and the pristine sky that accompanied that fair. However, what in the eyes of experts seemed to show that the plane sported a new camouflage pattern, this was not entirely correct. The colors were simply reversed, which gave it the appearance of a scheme with different patterns. This Mirage was the only one to sports this variation and kept it until the end of its days of operation, incorporating to the last, the blue color of the rudder. Currently you can see this Mirage in the Aeronautical Museum, using this characteristic painting scheme.

Guide of Colors			
Federal Standard	Light Grey Blue **35237**	Dark Grey **36152**	Light Grey **36440**
Humbrol	Dark Blue Grey **145**	Blue Grey **HN 2**	Light Gull Grey **183 (129)**
Gunze Sangyo	**H337**		**H325/H315**

Mirage 50CN Pantera - Chilean Air Force

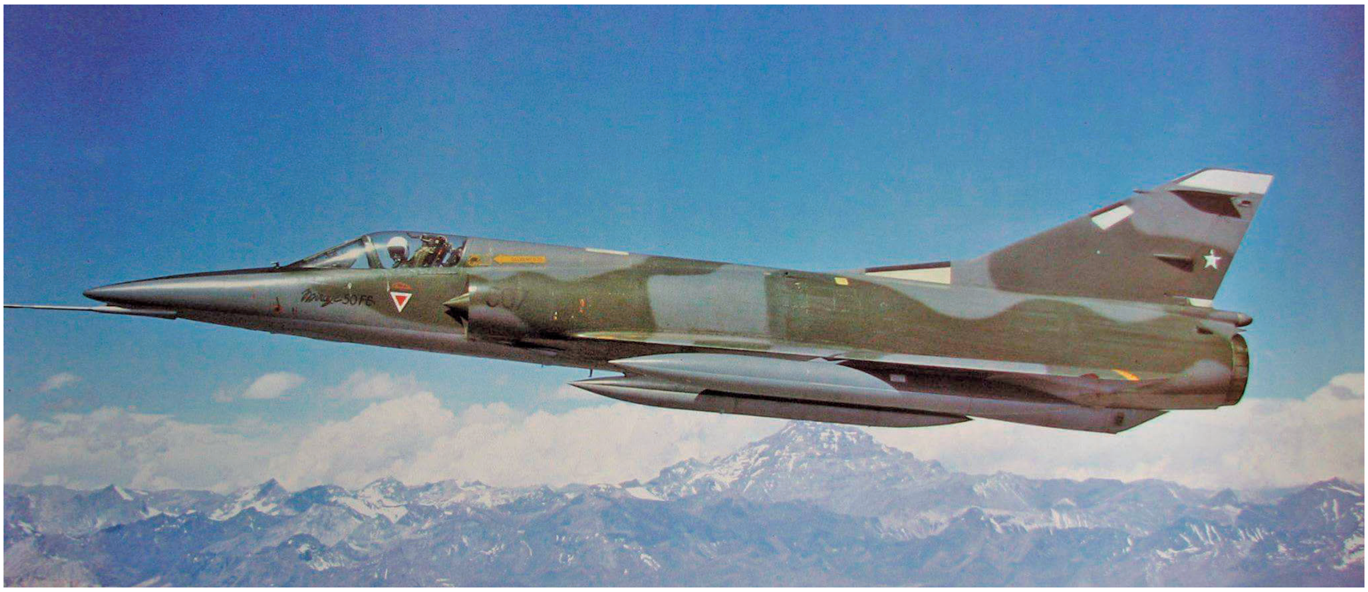
Mirage 50FC, No. 505, c/n 16, Aviation Group No. 4,
Chabunco Air Base, Punta Arenas, 2007



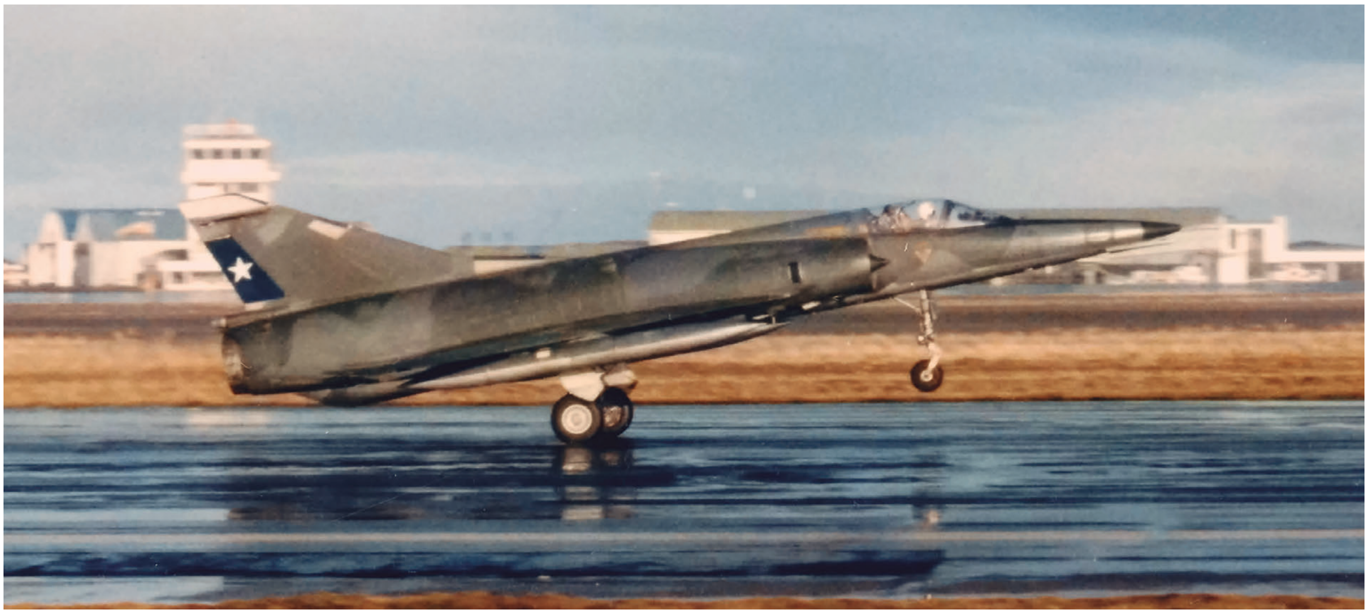
The last scheme used by the Mirage Panteras differed basically in the shades, where the dark gray was accentuated making the contrast of the colors more visible. The blue rudder appeared for the last time and the shield lost the tricolor, being replaced by a delineated version of low visibility. The colors of the numerals decreased in tonality and their format thinned a little compared to the earlier versions. It kept the Aviation Group No. 4 shield in low visibility stencil on the left side below the cockpit, while the Mirage Pantera badge was applied to the right. Regarding external loads, there was never uniformity of colors, and it was very typical to see Mirages with supplementary fuel tanks in colors other than those used by themselves.

Guide of Colors	■	■	■
Federal Standard	Light Grey Blue **35237**	Dark Grey **36152**	Light Grey **36440**
Humbrol	Dark Blue Grey **145**	Blue Grey **HN 2**	Light Gull Grey **183 (129)**
Gunze Sangyo	**H337**		**H325/H315**

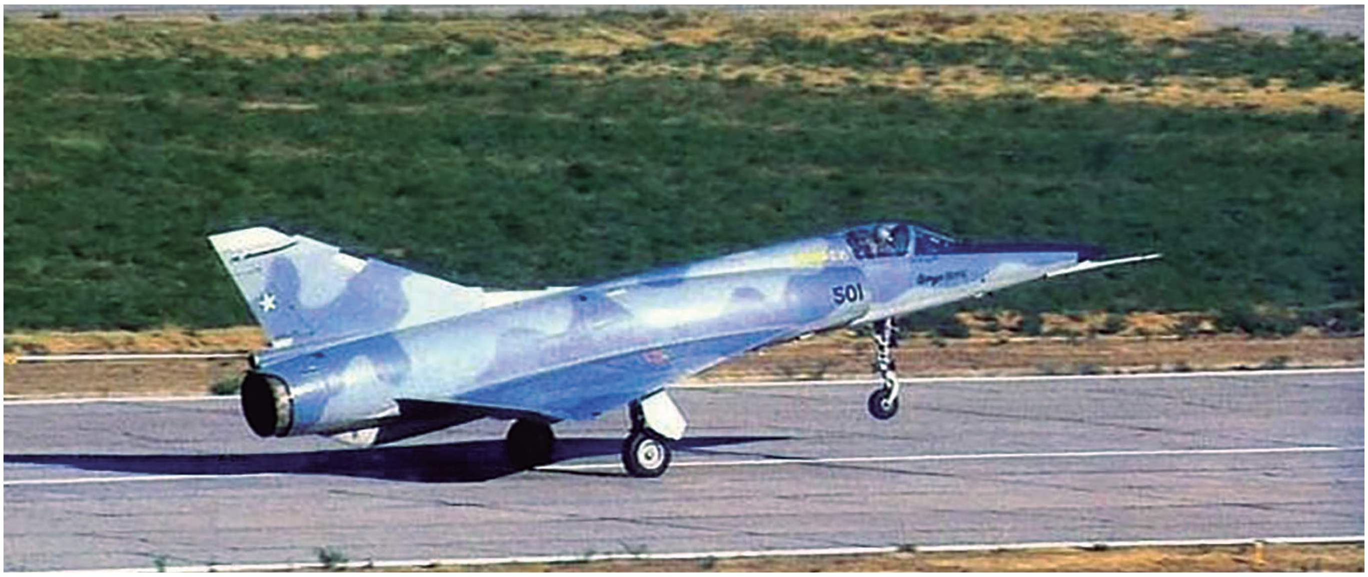
A la Chasse



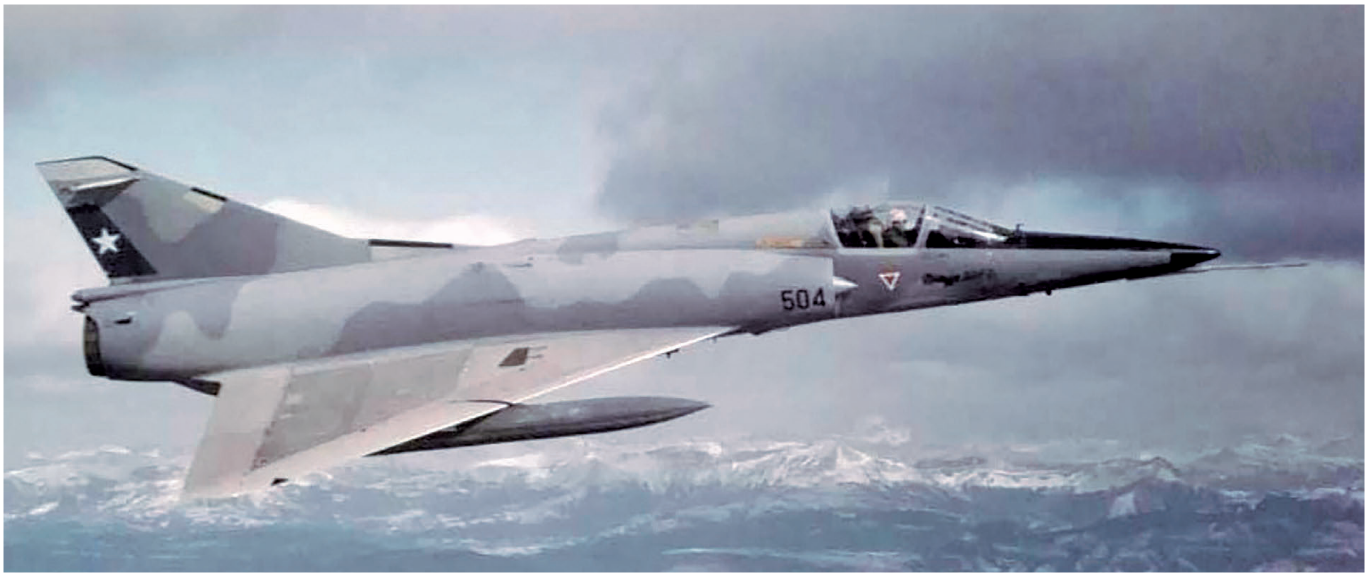
Mirage 50FC No. 507, flying over the Andes mountains, in a famous promotional photograph, showing its stylized aerodynamic lines and its imposing two-color camouflage painting. (Chilean Air Force)



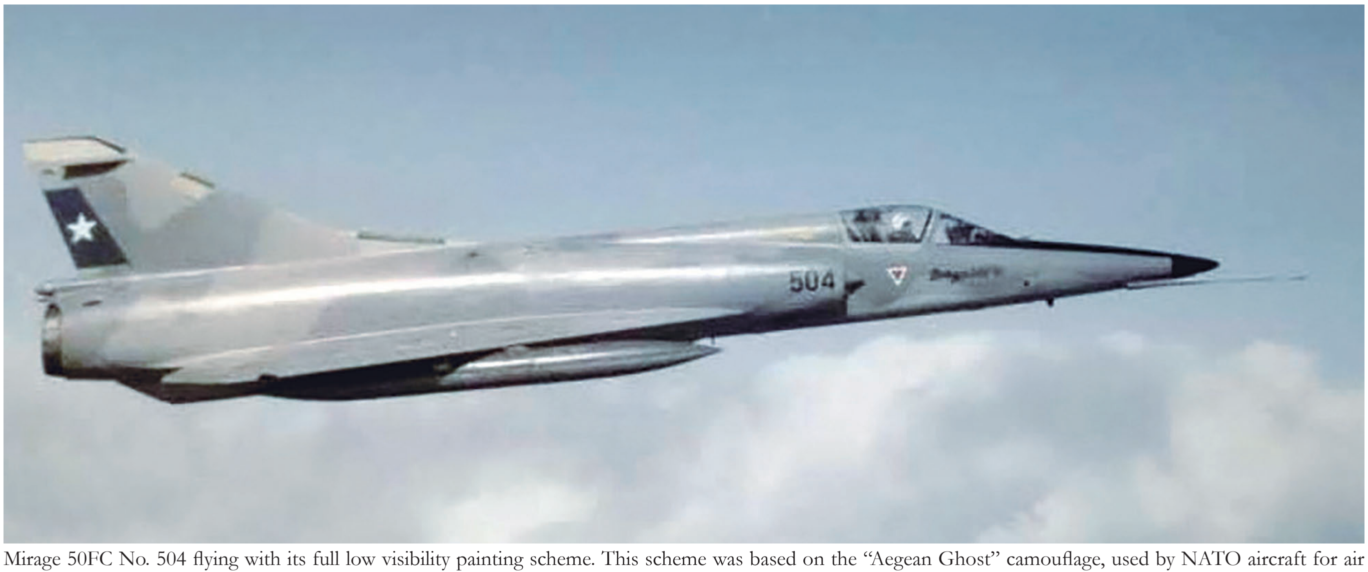
Mirage 50FC No. 506, landing at Chabunco Air Base on the wet runway, an almost permanent condition that the pilots had to deal with. The plane still uses the variation of the original painting scheme. (Rino Poletti collection)



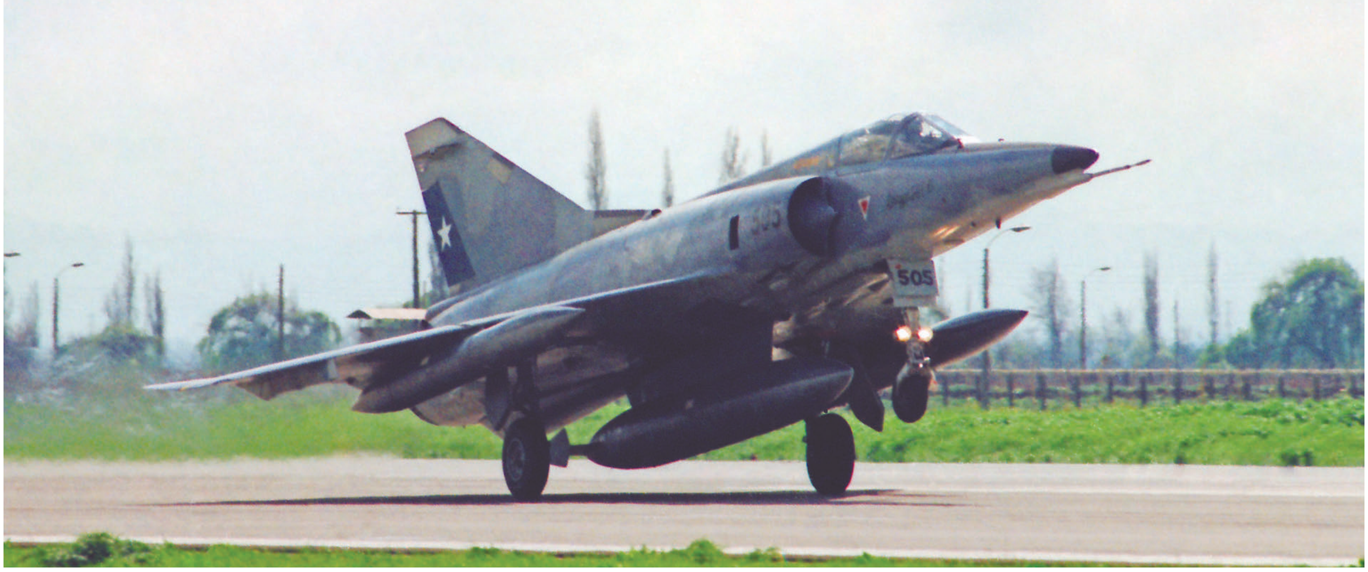
Mirage 50FC No. 501, landing and deploying its brake parachute. The plane uses its new low visibility painting scheme, in harmony with the camouflage of the Mirage 50C/DC. The side numerals kept the original shape, but in thicker strokes. (Rino Poletti Collection)



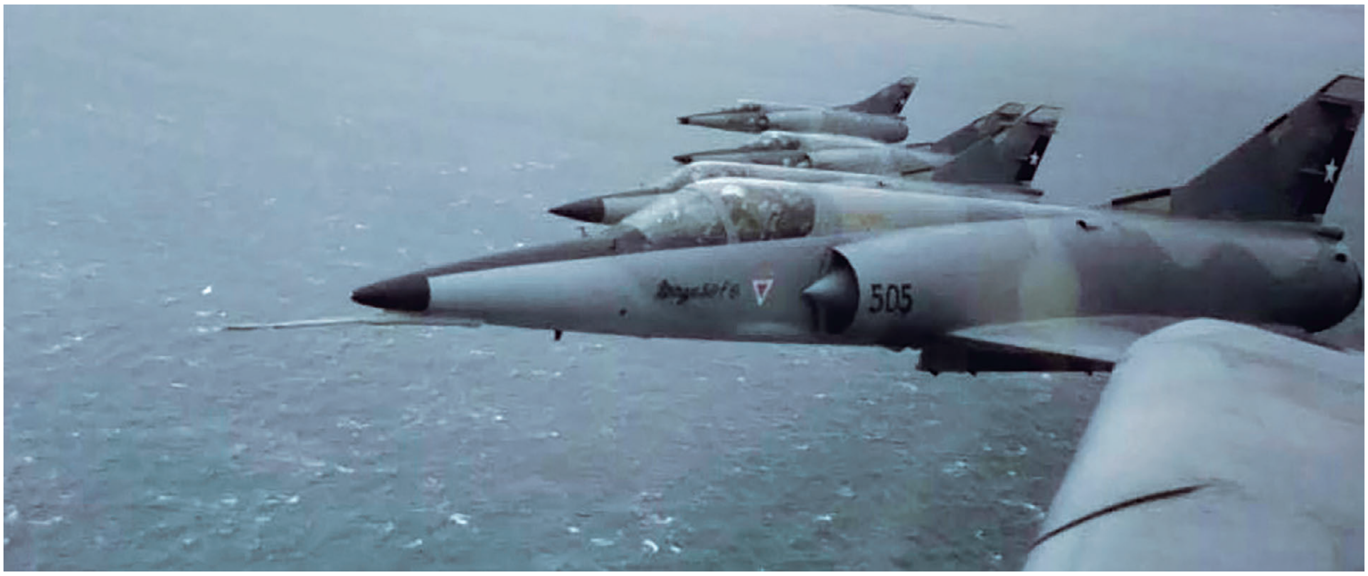
Mirage 50FC No. 504, sporting its low visibility painting scheme and evidencing wings replacement (not currently painted). Wing fatigue was a recurring problem on the Mirage 50FC, due to air-to-air training practices. (Rino Poletti collection)



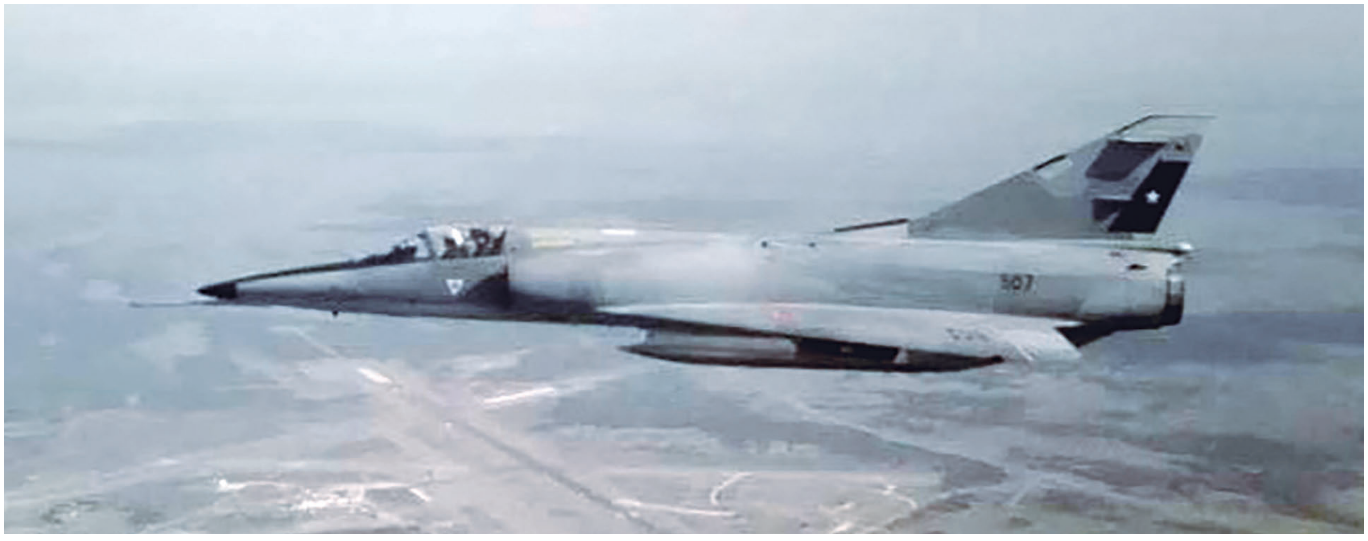
Mirage 50FC No. 504 flying with its full low visibility painting scheme. This scheme was based on the "Aegean Ghost" camouflage, used by NATO aircraft for air superiority missions. (Via Oscar Pereira)



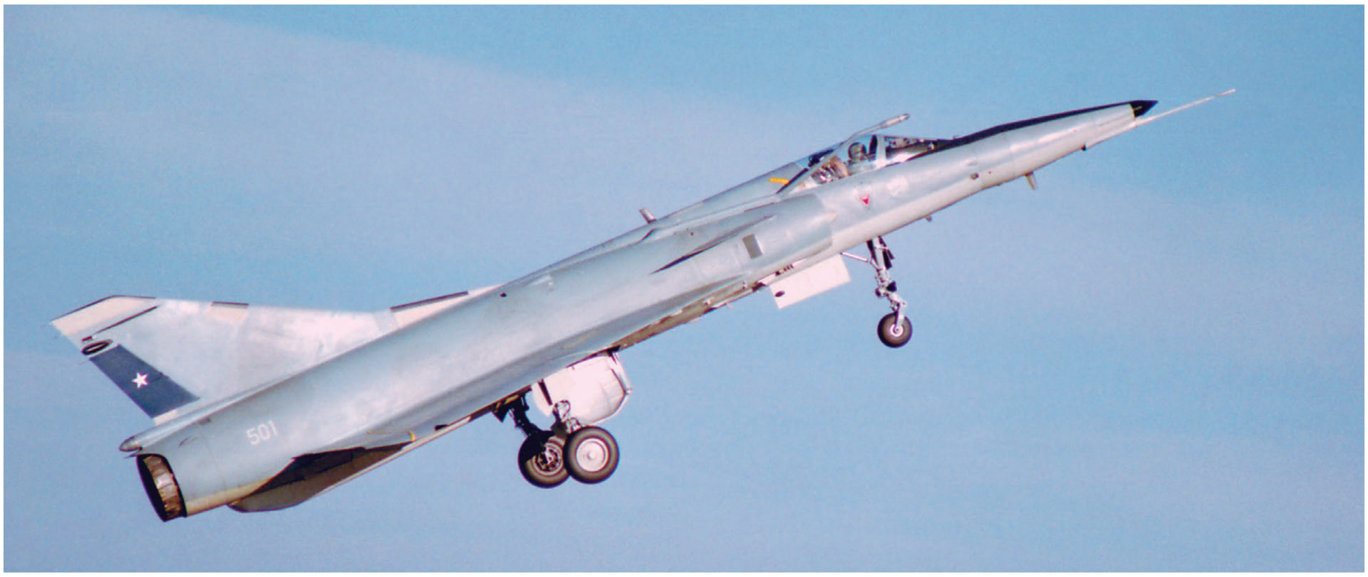
Mirage 50FC No. 505 landing after a transfer flight, with a configuration of a 1,300-liter ventral fuel supplemental tank and two 500-liter supersonic underwing tanks. (Alessandro Bocca collection)



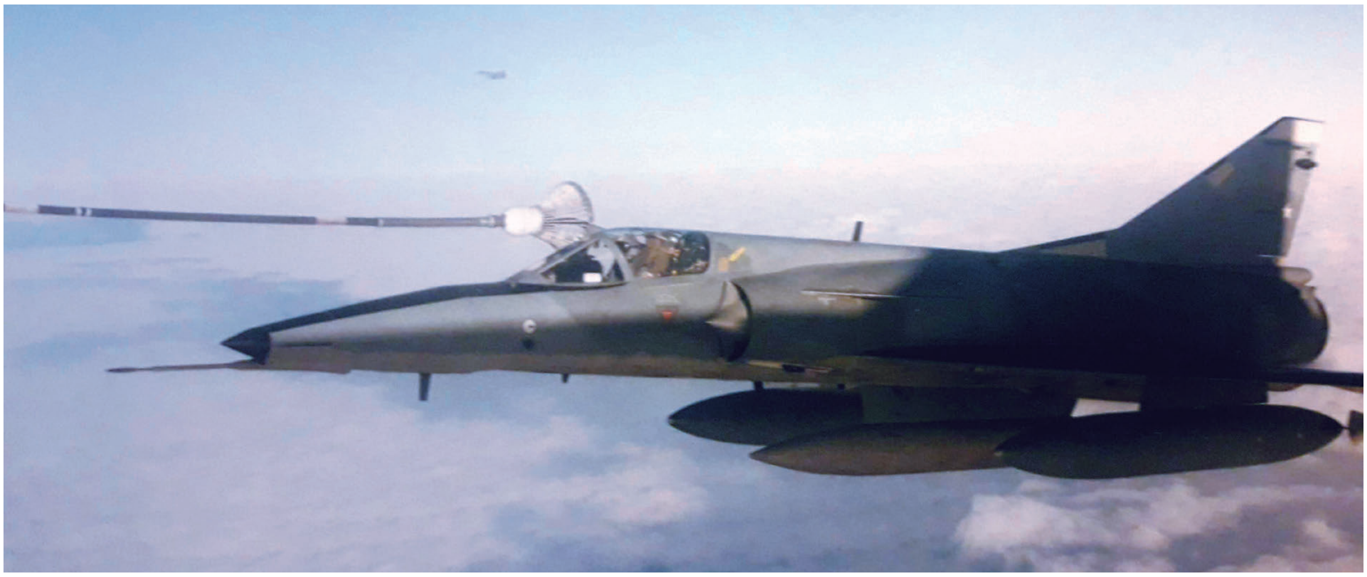
Mirage 50FC No. 505 flying in formation over the Southern sea. All planes use the low visibility painting scheme, including three Mirage 50FC, a 50C and a 50DC, from which the photograph was taken. (Via Oscar Pereira)



Mirage 50FC No. 507 flying over Punta Arenas, using the latest low-visibility painting scheme, before crashing on March 11, 1993. The plane was completely destroyed and its pilot, Captain Claudio Ibacache Escudero, ejected without injuries. (Via Oscar Pereira)



Mirage Pantera No. 501 performing a high-performance takeoff during one of its presentations at FIDAE 2004. Use the latest painting scheme with the rudder painted blue. (Alvaro Romero)



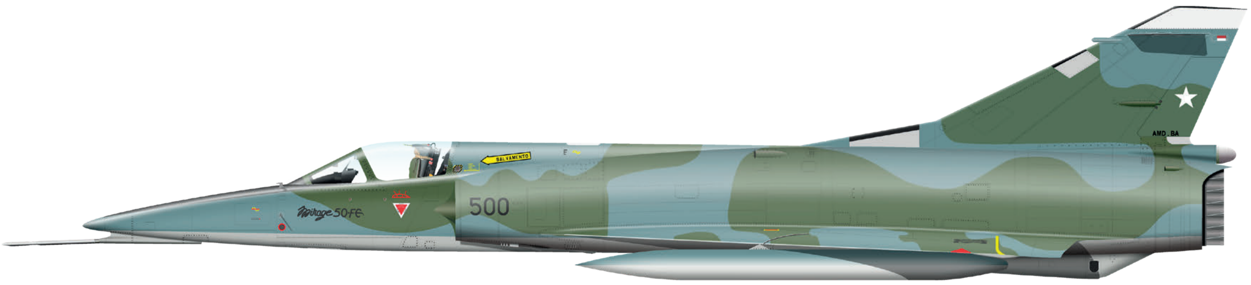
Mirage 50CN Pantera No. 508, being refueled in flight on its self-transfer to Brazil, to take part in Exercise Cruzex 2002. Along with No. 504 and No. 506, ex 50FC, they were commissioned, but No. 506 had technical problems and could not continue the journey. (Rino Poletti collection)

One of the last Mirage Pantera plane formations of the Aviation Group No. 4. Mirage Pantera No. 504 was the last former Mirage 5F of the Armée de l'Air to fly, on January 4, 2008, during its transfer to Santiago, under the command of Squadron Commander Cristian Pizarro Aste. (Via Octavio Martínez)

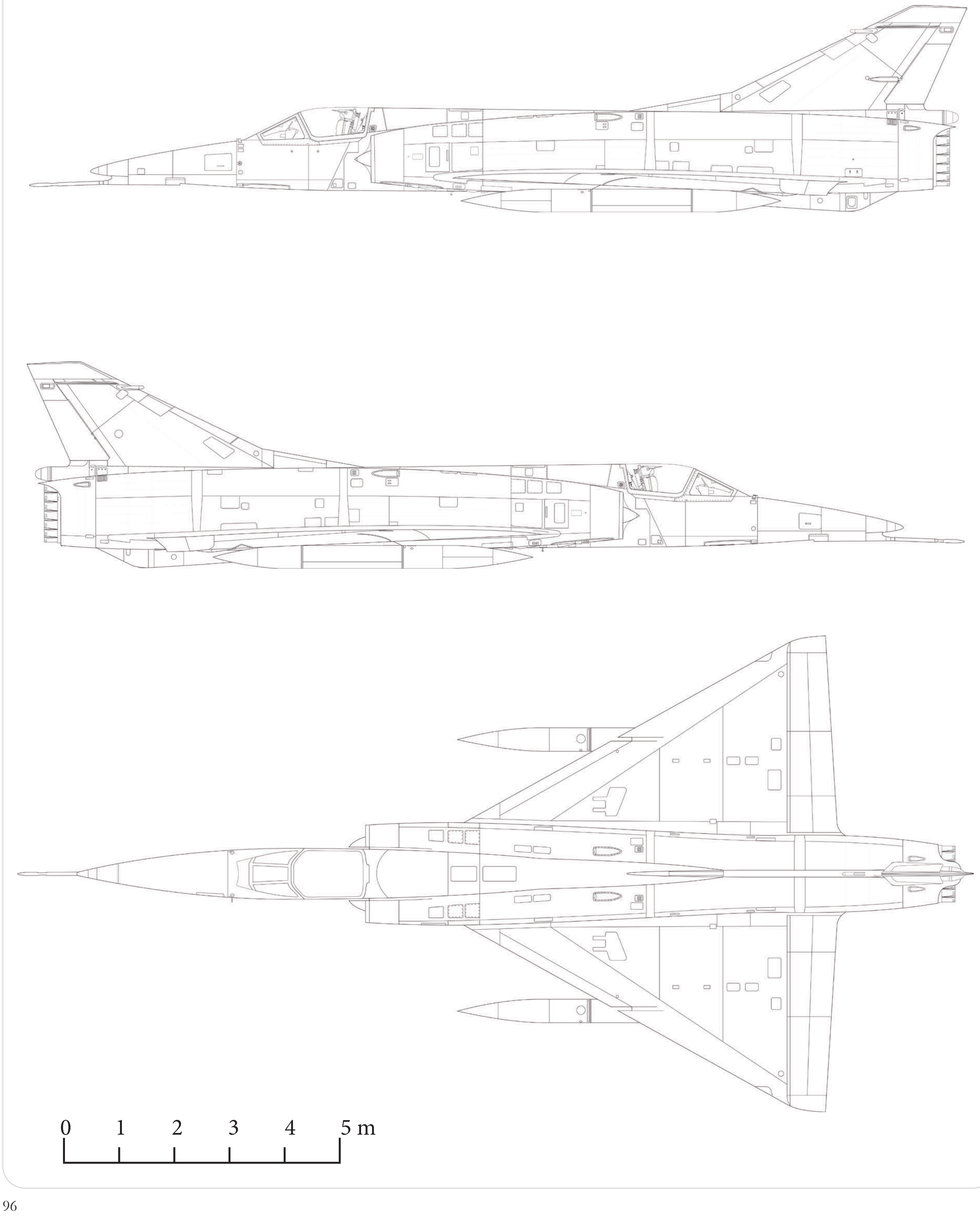
Technical sheet

Variant	Mirage 5J	Mirage 5F	Mirage 50FC	Mirage 50CN
Características Generales				
Crew	1	1	1	1
Length	15,5 m	15,5 m	15,5 m	17,0 m
Wingspan	8,2 m	8,2 m	8,2 m	8,2 m
Height	4,5 m	4,5 m	4,5 m	4,5 m
Wing surface	35 m^2	35 m^2	35 m^2	35 m^2
Empty weight	7.150 kg	7.150 kg	7.150 kg	7.150 kg
Maximum take-off weight	13.700 kg	13.700 kg	13.700 kg	13.700 kg
Power plant				
Model and variant	Atar 9C-5	Atar 9C-7	Atar 9K-50	Atar 9-K50
Normal thrust	4.300 kgf	4.300 kgf	5.000 kg	5.000 kg
Military thrust	6.200 kgf	6.200 kgf	7.200 kg	7.200 kg
Performance				
Maximum speed	2.350 km/h (2.2 Mach)	2.350 km/h (2.2 Mach)	2.350 km/h (2.2 Mach)	2.350 km/h (2.2 Mach)
Cruise speed	956 km/h	956 km/h	956 km/h	956 km/h
Combat radius	1.250 km	1.250 km	1.250 km	1.250 km
Transfer range	4.000 km	4.000 km	4.000 km	4.000 km
Ceiling service	18.000 m	18.000 m	18.000 m	18.000 m
Climbing speed	186 m/s	186 m/s	186 m/s	186 m/s
Weapons				
2 x DEFA 30 mm guns	●	●	●	●
2 x Matra JL-100	●	●		
2 x AIM-9 Sidewinder missile	●	●		
2 x Matra R550 Magic missile	●	●		
2 x Rafael Shafrir II missile			●	●
2 x Rafael Python III missile				●
Bombs (7 stations)	4.000 kg	4.000 kg	4.000 kg	4.000 kg
Griffin bombs				●

Dassault Mirage 50FC



Dassault Mirage 50FC



Credits

Authors

Julio Arróspide Rivera, *Chilean Science Computer Engineer, has developed his passion for aviation since his childhood through his illustrations and aeronautical knowledge. At the age of 15 he entered the School of Specialties of the FACh, graduating as an Airplane Mechanic part of the "Iceberg" promotion. During his 17 years of service at the FACh he worked as Crew Chief on Hawker Hunter, T-34A Mentor, T-37B/C, F-5E/F and T-35B Pillán. He also collaborated in the FACh fighter pilot publication, "Altas G's". He served in Aviation Group No. 7, the Aviation School, and the Operations Directorate. He was member of the Institute of Aeronautical Historical Research of Chile. For this installment, he has contributed with the development of the text and with the graphic design of the book, and he was the authorship of the ninety digital illustrations and the historical record of the aircraft represented in an investigation of more than two years.*

Alexandre Gannier, *prominent French aeronautical photographer and historian. He has made an extensive graphic record from the late 60s onwards both in the Armée de l'Air and in other Air Forces, mainly European. His work has been widely published in major journals and books worldwide. For this installment, he developed the operational history of the Mirages 5F in the Armée de l'Air and the contribution of historical photographs of these planes in the Ardennes, Auvergne and Alpine Fighter Squadrons.*

Raúl Zamora Martínez, *Chilean Science Computer Engineer, has developed his passion for aviation and the historical facts of the Chilean Air Force, accumulating an important bibliographic and photographic record. As a documenter and researcher, he has participated in several forums for the discussion of aeronautical issues, contributing to the dissemination and work of Chilean military aviation. He has contributed to researchers and sites specializing in aircraft registrations in Britain and the Netherlands, providing background to FACh aircraft fleets. He published an interesting article about the capabilities of the FACh in 1978 in Strategic Approach, while his photographic record has been published on the site aviationcorner.net and other forums and blogs dedicated to the subject. His interest in the FACh led him in 2009 to join the Institutional Reserve. For this installment, he elaborated most of the texts, all based on his personal archives and available sources.*

Collaborators

Alessandro Bocca Pérez, *Chilean Mechanical Civil Engineer, researcher and aeronautical photographer. He has graphically recorded the work of the Chilean Air Force between 1980s and 1990s, collecting an important catalog of photographs of combat planes in operation. He collaborated with magnificent photographs of the Mirages 50FC.*

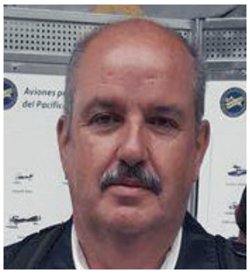
Anselmo Aguilar Urra, *Chilean Civil Electrician Engineer, Aeronautical Researcher, is an active partner of the Institute of Aeronautical Historical Research of Chile. He has collaborated in many publications nationally and internationally and is Head of the Editorial Board of Editorial Manutara. He collaborated with the revision of the text and photographs.*

Christian Boisselon, *prominent French photographer and aeronautical historian. His photographs have been published in important aeronautical publications such as Air Fan and Air Forces Monthly. He collaborated with historical photographs of the Mirages 5F operating in the Armée de l'Air.*

Claudio Cáceres Godoy, *Chilean Aeronautical Researcher and Professional Photographer, is director of the Institute of Aeronautical Historical Research of Chile. He has written numerous publications, monographs of historical aircraft of the Chilean Air Force. He collaborated with photographs and historical accuracies.*

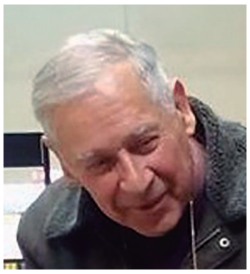
Iván Cifuentes Ormazábal, *Chilean former specialist in Communication and Navigation of the FACh and also a member of the skydiving team "Boinas Azules" (Blue Berets). He immigrated to the United States in 1980 as an engineer for TFT and then RACAL. He is an aviation enthusiast and modeler. He collaborated with the English translation.*

Sergio Contardo Flores (rip), *Chilean retired Air Brigadier General of the Chilean Air Force, was a pilot of helicopters and combat planes: P-47, Vampire, A-37B, F-5E/F and A-36. He was commander of Aviation Group No. 4 and Commander-in-Chief of the 1st Air Brigade. He collaborated with photographs and historical accuracies.*



Rodrigo Larraín Bergen, *Aeronautical Researcher, is a collaborating partner of IIHAC. Creator of groups related to FACh research, in different social networks. Founding member of the Association of Modelers of the 5th Region. He collaborated with the revision of the text and historical precisions.*

Patrick Laureau, *French professional photographer, and historian, with numerous publications nationally and internationally. He graphed the FACh in different publications for about 20 years and belonged to the Public Relations staff of the FACh. He collaborated with photographs from his magnificent collection.*



Germán Lüer Muñoz, *Chilean Researcher, documenter and aeronautical photographer. He worked on the staff of the Chilean Air Force magazine in the 1980s. He has edited multiple research papers and has participated in the edition of numerous articles and aeronautical publications for more than 40 years. He collaborated with photographs and with the revision of the text.*

Octavio Martínez San Martín, *Chilean retired Non-Commissioned Officer of the Chilean Air Force, Crew Chief of the Mirage 50/Pantera planes, throughout his career, was concerned with making a unique photographic record of the operation of the Mirages in Aviation Group No. 4. He collaborated with the revision of the text and historical photographs.*

Guillermo Morales Castro, *Chilean retired Air Force Non-Commissioned Officer, worked as Crew Chief and Line Chief of the Mirage 50/Pantera planes for 26 years of his career. He currently works at the DGAC. He collaborated with the revision of the text, photographic stuff and historical precisions.*

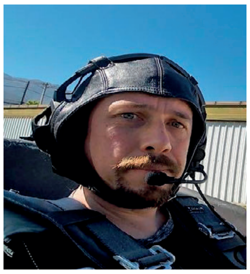
Javier Muñoz Romero, *Chilean retired Non-Commissioned Officer of the Chilean Navy and Aeronautical Researcher. As aeronautical enthusiast, he has compiled historical information from the Chilean Air Force and has an important photographic record. He collaborated with the revision of the text and photographs of the Mirages fleet.*

Oscar Pereira Maturana (rip), *Chilean Journalist and aeronautical researcher. He worked in the Communication Department of the Chilean Air Force in the 1st Air Brigade in Antofagasta in the 1990s. He was the owner of "Sur Maquetas", a bookstore dedicated to aeronautical work. He provided unpublished photographic material of the Mirages in flight.*

Rino Poletti Barrios, *Chilean Aeronautical researcher and illustrator, director of the Institute of Aeronautical Historical Research of Chile, has made important collaborations in the publications of the FACh Magazine and the Pillán magazine. He collaborated with the revision of the text, photographs, and historical accuracies.*

Luis Quintana Aránguiz, *Chilean Computer Scientist, Aeronautical Researcher, and professional photographer, modeler, spotter, press correspondent for written and electronic media of Defense and collaborator of FIDAE. He currently collaborates on the website Gazeta Aeronáutica. He collaborated with photographs from his archive.*

Álvaro Romero Pérez, *Chilean International aeronautical correspondent. Historical-aeronautical researcher, covering the civil, commercial, and military aviation. Collaborator of the Chilean Aeronautical Museum with the publication of monographs and reports. He lead the aeronautical blog ModoCharlie.com. He collaborated with the revision of the text and historical photographs.*



Antonio Segovia Rentería, *Chilean photographer, researcher and aeronautical illustrator, administrator of the Tally-Ho website, which disseminates the work of national civil and military aviation. He is a collaborating partner of the IIHAC, where he makes continuous collaborations. He collaborated with the revision of the text and with photographs of the Mirage material.*

Duncan Silva Donoso, *a retired Chilean Air Force colonel, was a fighter pilot for A-37B and Hawker Hunter aircraft. He was part of the Acrobatic Team "Halcones". He was Commander of the Aviation Group Mo. 12. He collaborated with the revision of the text, provided magnificent photographs in flight and made historical precisions.*

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Danilo Villarroel Canga, *Chilean Aeronautical Writer and Researcher, cooperating partner of the Institute of Historical-Aeronautical Research of Chile. Member of the MNAE researchers staff. He currently serves as Head of the Photographic Archive of the National Aeronautical and Space Museum of Chile. He collaborated with photographs and historical accuracies.*

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"Mirages del Armée de l'Air en la Fuerza Aérea de Chile", has relied on bibliography and photographic material to make a more comprehensive historical delivery about the evolution of the Mirage 50FC in the Chilean Air Force. An important part of the development of this installment is the historical contribution of the French photographer and historian, Mr. Alexandre Gannier, who put at our disposal his historical archive of the Armée de l'Air and splendid photographs of his collection and other French collaborators.

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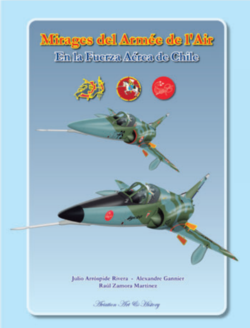
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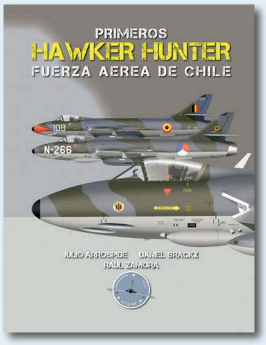
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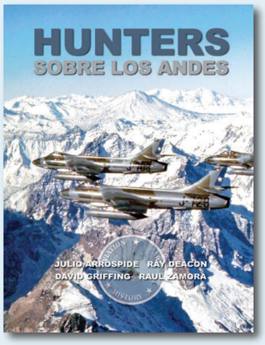
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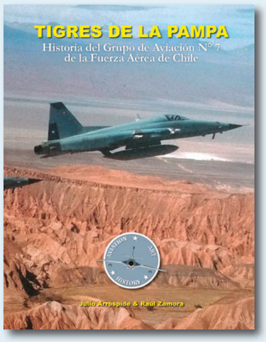
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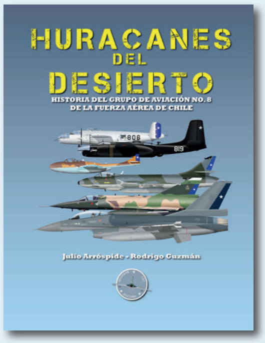
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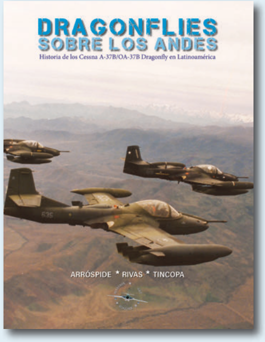
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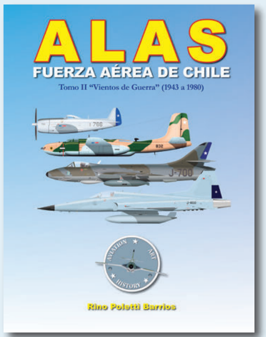
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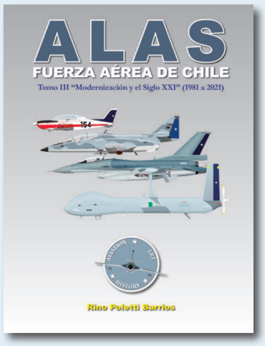
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